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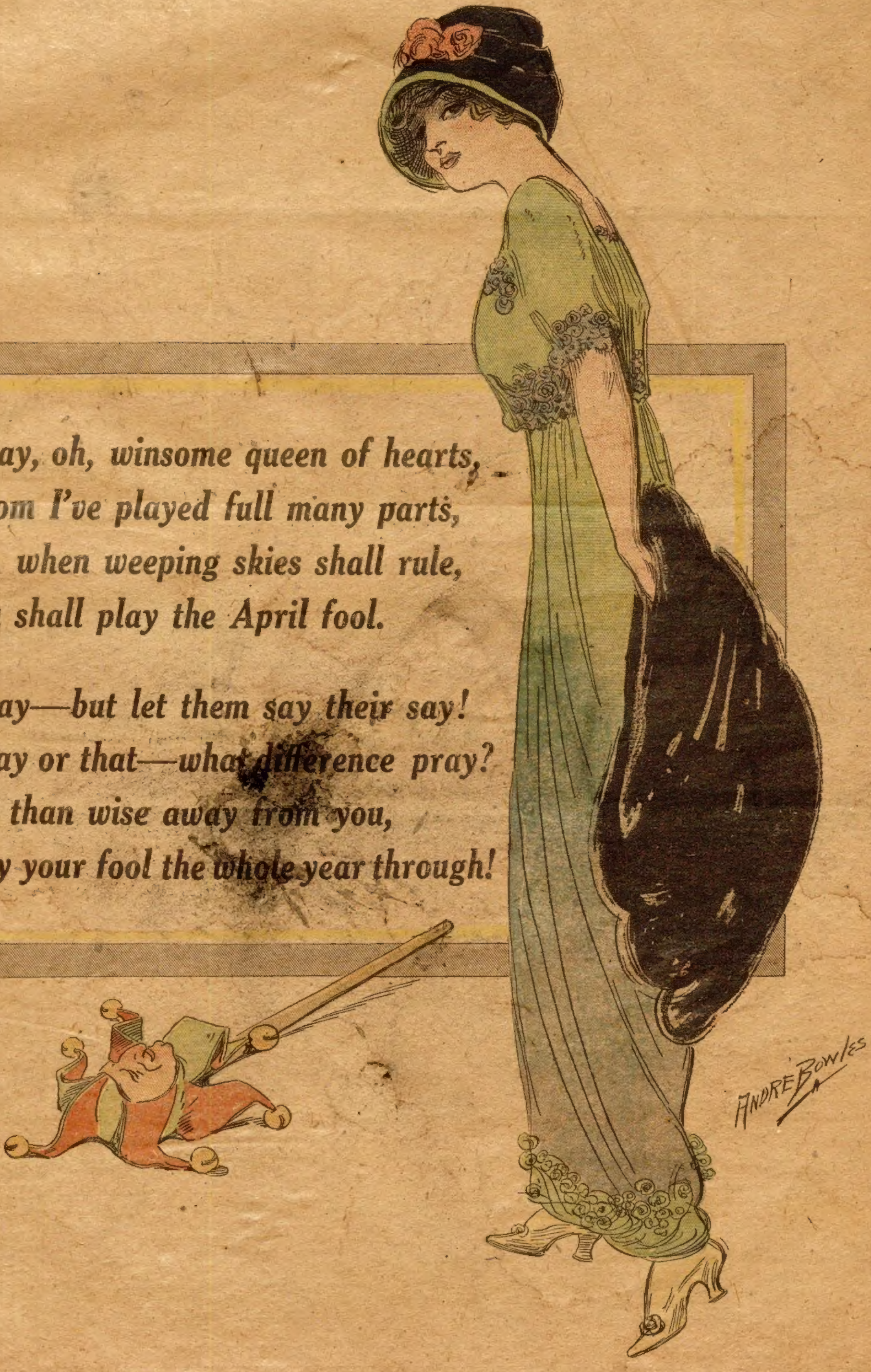


They say, oh, winsome queen of hearts,
To whom I've played full many parts,
That I, when weeping skies shall rule,
To you shall play the April fool.

They say—but let them say their say!
This way or that—what difference pray?
Rather than wise away from you,
I'll play your fool the whole year through!

Trouble at Watts

By William Alfred Corey

KITTY LUMSDEN kissed her mother as if taking medicine, and ran from the house without even answering the "Good-by, Kit" which Bob shouted from the kitchen. And buttoning her gloves as she went, she hurried toward the corner as though the conducter of the "Watts Local" was already reaching for his bell cord to give the starting signal. There was plenty of time to catch the seven-ten car, though even this was wholly unnecessary. It was not really essential that Kitty should start before seven-thirty.

But the young lady had her reasons for hurrying. She knew that Walden Bixby would be along in his machine about seven-ten, on his way to his real estate office in the city. Of course, he would drive past the house to take her to the Central Telephone Station. But that slick little combination of business and pleasure was to cease, unless she was mistaken! She'd show him! Just as he should appear with his fine airs and his swell machine and his olive branch of peace, she'd coolly snub him, she would. She'd calmly turn her back and take the Watts Local. She'd turn him down right there before all of Watts—at least all of it that was astir that early in the morning—and how she wished the whole suburb might be out to witness his humiliation! Oh, she'd fix him! He'd see that he couldn't play her for a side show to his main attraction, even if she was poor and he did own the half of Watts. Huh!

A very superficial judge of girls could see that Kitty Lumsden had on her fighting mitts. The pink in her cheeks was not wholly of the sharp morning air. And to aver that her black eyes flashed fire is not wholly to speak in metaphors. Every line, every movement of her shapely little form bespoke fires within and dangers of volcanic outbursts. Possibly there were spots on the son—that is, the son of old Millionaire Mellville Bixby, who lived further down the peninsula, and whose son Walden carried Watts around in his pocket. Anyway, there were storms and things brewing, and Kitty was going to show this son that there were no spots on her, and that he couldn't carry her around in his pocket.

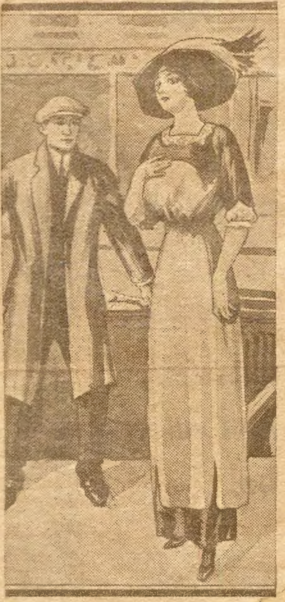
Kitty reached the corner of San Jose avenue and Pacific View street and still no Watts Local was in sight. And how the little devils of pique and anger and jealousy and general misery ran riot in her consciousness as she stood in the cold, damp air waiting for that car! Said one small imp, "There's Clara Katz. Like as not she'll see you hand it to Walden, and then she'll sail in and try to catch him. She's wanted him ever so long, you know." Clara was bookkeeper for Mr. Crier, who kept the big general store in Watts and whose numerous children overran the neighborhood. "What a blue Monday!" suggested another little demon. Another called her attention to the foggy morning and the indications of rain. Still another pointed out the blocks and blocks of cheap little shacks that made up Watts—little homes bought on the "Dollar-Down-Dollar-a-Week" plan—and the general undesirableness of the suburb as a place of residence. Another——

But just then the Watts Local came in sight, and sure enough, there, was Walden Bixby in his machine just behind. But Kitty, with grim resolution, was ready, and just as the young real estate man's car reached the corner ready to swing west on Pacific View street toward her house, and he caught sight of her and stopped, she was calmly mounting the steps of the Local. She didn't look at him. But she knew he was looking at her, and she felt that the conductor of the Local and several other Wattsites were enjoying his discomfiture. Ah, how sweet is revenge! Did he think he could speed his machine in open daylight right on San Jose avenue itself, in company with another woman, and not hear from her? Huh!

But the sweetest revenge soon palls. And Kitty Lumsden had no sooner seated herself more or less uncomfortably in the rigid car seat (she couldn't help comparing it with the luxury of Walden's tonneau) and observed the young man's machine shoot ahead of the electric car without his so much as glancing at the window the girl was looking out of, than her mood changed. No, she didn't relent. What else could she have done? He had taken another woman riding without excuse or explanation, and this, in an engaged man, was unpardonable. No, she had to keep her self-respect. And of course, all that was left now was to give him back his ring—she was tempted to take off her glove and look at it—dismiss him, and forget it all—when she could.

But in spite of her the little devils came trooping in again and took possession of her thoughts as the Watts Local rattled along, taking the dust of Walden's machine. They maliciously reminded her of the many, many rides she had taken with young Walden Bixby along that avenue. How proud she had been of her handsome, enterprising young "Dollar-Down-Dollar-a-Week" real estate man! The little glooms and imps of darkness recalled to her mind all the plans she and Walden had discussed; of Walden's purpose to begin raising his real estate prices; to put on building restrictions, and gradually to weed out the unsightly hovels; to bring in a better class of residents and to make of Watts something more than the joke it was. And then on the hill overlooking the sea he was going to build a bungalow, a fine one, which was to be their home when—but that was all in the past, and Kitty sighed. He had taken to running with other women, and this, of course, was the limit. Good thing she found him out before instead of after.

Kitty was wisely glad when the dingy, dirty Watts Local reached the Central Telephone Station in the city, and her hat and wraps put carefully away in her locker in the girl's restroom, she found herself before the switchboard with the ear pads clamped over her ears. If there's anything that will effectually put the glooms to rout it is occupation. And certainly it would be a gloom with praiseworthy persistance that could make any headway against the innumerable calls claiming a telephone girl's attention.



"Quick! There's no time!"

And so in no time at all Kitty had dipped her voice into the dissolved sugar and was trilling sweetly into the mouthpiece, "Number, please?" "Put in your nickle, please." "Line's busy," "Party doesn't answer," etc., just as though she was happy as a bird and no "other woman" had darkened her sky.

And so her day would have passed if something hadn't happened. But suddenly her name and a familiar voice came into her ear. "Hello, is that you, Kit!" she heard, and recognized the voice of Clara Katz at Watts. The connection was lost on the instant, and in the interval Kitty wasn't certain that she wanted to talk with Clara. Of course, Clara would want to pump her about her break with Walden. And then Clara got the line again, and Kitty heard, "Hello, Kit, I lost the line. Say, Kit, there's another fire down at Watts"—and again somebody broke in.

But Kitty had heard enough. Another fire down at Watts? Fire? The word struck terror to the girl's heart and drove everything else from her mind—telephone calls, the other woman, even Walden. Fire! And her invalid mother was confined in their little board cottage, and Bob was away at school. And Watts was one immense firetrap, with no fire protection to speak of!

Kitty, with quick presence of mind made the connection and called, "Fire double three," thus notifying the city fire station. Then she removed her ear pads and rushed from her switchboard and into the manager's office. It took but a moment to explain to Mr. Crosby the situation and to be relieved from duty. And in another moment Kitty had seized her hat and wraps in the restroom, and was in the street looking for the Watts Local. Her heart sank as she realized that her mother and all Watts might burn up long before that lumbering coach would reach the suburb.

"Good morning, Kitty. Get right in. I know where you're going. Heard the alarm you turned in on my line. Quick, there's no time to lose!"

There was Walden Bixby in his machine right by her side. He was half standing, and, holding the car door open, was almost commanding her to enter. She obeyed. There was no other choice. And in one brief instant Kitty forgot the other woman, forgot her personal pride, and the affront that had been put upon her, and in a moment Walden had thrown his motor into the high and was breaking the speed laws in the direction of Watts.

They caught up with and raced Motor Fire Engine No. 6, which, leaving a trail of burning cinders, was whizzing through the air on its way to the fire at Watts like a meteor trying to make up lost time. They overtook and passed an electric repair wagon, which in some way had gotten the start of them.

The speeders going to the fire at Watts gathered numbers and excitement as they went by the law of accretion. Motorcyclists, either through curiosity and the free-for-all race, or having interests at Watts, threw on speed, removed their mufflers, and added their smoke and their smells and their din to the avalanche descending upon Watts. Doctors with patients at Watts, bill collectors with accounts there, idlers with no business at all there; everybody, in short, who could possibly get to Watts while the excitement was on, rushed pell-mell in that direction. The street cars going that way filled up. Teamsters invited pedestrians to get in, and whipped up their teams; tramps stole rides; small boys on ponies rode double, treble, and quadruple, and bicyclists came down the pike in platoons, companies, and regiments. If mere numbers and thunderous noise could put out the fire, Watts was already saved.

But when Engine No. 6, spitting fire and snorting vapors, reached Watts, with Walden and Kitty just behind, they found the place immersed in its usual slumberous calm. The dogs still snapped lazily at fleas on the doorsteps, and the foreign children still cluttered the streets and alleys. The smoke that Walden and Kitty had seen—watched apprehensively as they flew along—was only a Portugese woman burning trash in her back yard. It was evident there was no fire at Watts, and the only excitement at all was what the invaders had brought with them.

Engine No. 6 circled around, stopped in front of Crier's store, and began to roar like a lion seeking some fire it might destroy, while Walden and Kitty brought their machine to a stop and looked wonderingly at each other. And as the rest of the excitement hunters began to arrive and gather around and occupy space, Watts woke up. The dogs stopped snapping at fleas and barked furiously. The children came from all directions and got in the way, and people began to come out of the doors and peer from windows.

Kitty got out of the machine and hurried into Crier's store. She met Clara Katz, and each girl's face mirrored the astonishment pictured in the other.

"Clara, what on earth?" began Kitty. "Where's the—fire?"

"The fire?" repeated Clara. "What fire? I never said there was a fire."

"You said"—but Kitty was interrupted by a shriek of laughter, as Clara fell into a chair and doubled up like a clasp knife. "I said—I said," cried Clara between gasps, "I never said—I told you—that there was another"—Clara put her lips to Kitty's ear—"another Crier down at Watts—Mrs. Crier's got a new baby." And again Clara fell into the chair, while Kitty stood as though petrified, looking at Clara and helplessly listening to the mob outside.

Just then a woman dressed in the spick-and-span uniform of a trained nurse entered the store from the rear of the building where the Crier family lived, and Kitty recognized under the white-starched uniform and the white-starched manner and the white-starched smile the woman who had ridden in her place in Walden's machine. Was this the beginning of another revelation?

"Clara Katz," commanded Kitty, "you go out there and explain how—how this thing—happened. I can't."

Clara was equal to the emergency, and the word soon spread. The firemen swore, and then laughed and got away as soon as possible. The crowd shouted and roared, and then lingered to shout and roar some more. But after a while the mob and the fun melted away, and then Kitty ventured out to find Walden waiting and smiling.

"It's all right, Kitty," Walden said. "Mistakes will happen. I made a mistake, too. I ought to have told you that it was my cousin, Miss Gibbs, who was in the machine with me yesterday. She's a trained nurse. It was an emergency call, you know," and Walden blushed. "Let's go for a spin."

And Kitty was only too glad.

* * *

Followed.

A nervous commuter on his dark, lonely way home from the railroad station heard footsteps behind him. He had an uncomfortable feeling that he was being followed. He increased his speed. The footsteps quickened accordingly. The commuter darted down a lane. The footsteps still pursued him. In desperation he vaulted over a fence and, rushing into a churchyard, threw himself panting on one of the graves.

"If he follows me here," he thought fearfully, "there can be no doubt as to his intentions."

The man behind was following. He could hear him scrambling over the fence. Visions of highwaymen, maniacs, garroters and the like flashed through his brain. Quivering with fear the nervous one arose and faced his pursuer.

"What do you want?" he demanded. "Wh-why are you following me?"

"Say," asked the stranger, mopping his brow, "do you always go home like this? I'm going up to Mr. Brown's and the man at the station told me to follow you, as you lived next door. Excuse my asking you, but is there much more to do before we get there?"

* * *

Handicapped.

A man from Massachusetts who served in the Spanish War tells a story of a New York regiment many of whose members were recruited on the East Side. They were spoiling for a fight, and it became necessary to post a sentry to preserve order.

A big husky Bowery recruit of pugilistic propensities was put on guard outside, and given special orders to see that quiet reigned, and above all things, if trouble came his way, not to lose possession of his rifle.

Soon a general row began, growing in proportions as the minutes passed. The soldier walked his post nervously, without interrupting, until the corporal of the guard appeared on the scene with re-enforcements.

"Why didn't you stop the row?" shouted the corporal.

The sentry, balancing his rifle on his shoulder, raised his arms to the correct boxing position, and replied:

"Sure, phwat could I do wid this gun in me hands!"

* * *

His Resources

"'Where there's a will there's a way,'" avers Taylor Holmes. "The way, however, varies, as in the case of a certain pickpocket, who was convicted and promptly fined.

The lawyer of the pickpocket took the fine imposed upon his client very much to heart.

"'Twenty-five dollars!' he expostulated. 'Your Honor, where is this poor unfortunate man to get twenty-five dollars?'

"His Honor didn't know, or if he did he refrained from saying so, but the prisoner was less discreet.

"'Just let me out of here for ten or fifteen minutes, he said, 'and I'll show you!'"

TO LEDGER READERS

Be sure and read the great occult story in this issue, "THE PRINCESS ZITHENZA; or, THE SOUL'S CALL." You will find it a strange story. Don't miss any of the "FRONTIVARD" stories; they are corkers. Look out for some good humorous short stories in each issue. Next week's leader will be "THE WHISPERING PINES; or, A SOUTHLAND MYSTERY." You will find it a fine, fascinating story. Look out for a splendid sea story, "CAPTAIN KIDD'S RETURN; or, THE ICEBERG'S GIFT," by William H. Manning, also, "CLOSET SKELETONS; or, THE WAGES OF SIN," by Emma Howard Wight. A splendid lot of stories are going to appear in the Ledger during the next few months. If you cannot get the Ledger from our agents regularly we strongly advise you to send in a subscription.

The Princess Zithenza

Or, The Soul's Call -:- -:- By A. M. Freeman

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CHAPTER I.

THE STRANGE JOURNEY.

I DO NOT ask the reader to believe my story, since I feel that I should not believe it myself, had it happened to any one else. Still the facts are so strange, so supernatural, that I feel called upon to give them publicity, even at the risk of being called either a liar or insane. As I am neither, the opinion of the outside world matters little, and I, therefore, will relate my tale regardless of the consequence.

I am a woman of twenty-five, having a good solid education and a knack for writing which caused me three years ago to take up the journalistic profession, in which I have, since then, made an enviable record, being considered, up to six months ago, when I gave up the work forever, the best woman reporter in the city. What helped me the most in my work was that I had a sort of second sight, knowing in a semi-unconscious way what people thought, as well as coming events which would in any way affect my life or that of those around me. My mother told me, after I grew up, that this one peculiar trait of character had been mine from early childhood, until it became a byword with the family that whatever little Cora said was sure to happen, no matter what was done to prevent the childish prophecy. This was done, however, in an unconscious way by me, for I was too young to realize the exact meaning of my words.

My predictions would be given in the most natural way. For instance, while looking at a horse, I would say:

"Mamma, Bill is going to die soon."

"What makes you say that?"

"I don't know, but he'll die just the same."

Within a month the horse would be dead, dying of some sudden ill which could not possibly have been noticed at the time I had predicted his death. The same was true about the crops, for we lived on a farm; I told of a hailstorm ten days before its coming; I gave the exact number of chicks each hen would hatch.

This trait of mine greatly worried my mother, making her think I was not long for this world; but I grew on normally and perfectly healthy until my twentieth year, when my folks moved from the farm to the city, and my environment changed, throwing me into the newspaper almost against my wishes, certainly against those of my mother, who feared for me the temptations and pitfalls of the business world of a large city. But, in this, as in everything in my life so far, I was pushed onward by the hand of fate, rather than my own volition.

The first year in Denver was disastrous for the family. First, we had a fire which destroyed house and furniture. As we had no insurance, the loss was complete. Then father fell sick, and an expensive operation followed, leaving him an invalid for life, with big doctor bills to pay and no revenue with which to pay them.

My elder brother was married and lived on the old farm, but the crops that year were a failure, and he had a large family to support, so, of course, he was not pressed for rent money, and that source of income was also taken from us. Mother was worrying herself sick, wondering how she could manage to support the sick husband and two younger children as well as myself. When she confided her misgivings to me, I simply answered, though at the time I had no idea what I could do to earn a living for the family:

"I will be in position to help you within a week. Don't worry."

"What do you intend doing?' she asked, surprised.

"I don't know. Something will turn up. I shall be at work by Monday."

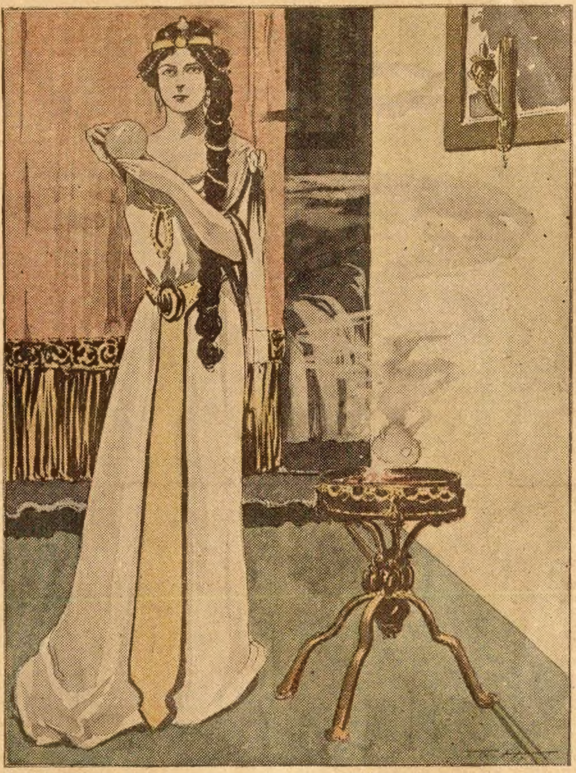
Mother's face cleared, since she trusted my word almost as much as she trusted her Bible. It was not the same with me. Every time, after making one of my prophetic statements, as I tried to reason the probability of its coming true, my heart would sink, and, I would reproach myself for having aroused hopes that could not possibly be realized. In this case the remorse was greater, since the disappointment would be the more bitter should I have made a mistake. I hadn't the heart to tell mother what I feared, so I went to bed worried, almost sick. Toward morning, after rolling and tossing all night, I fell asleep. When I awoke, two hours later, my first conscious thought was that I had to hasten to dress and go down town to find the solution of the problem which had worried me all night.

I arose at once, this time feeling sure that I was about to take a step in the right direction. I dressed and went down to breakfast.

"I am going down town, mother," I announced, as I was eating. "Don't be worried if I don't come home to lunch."

"You are going to see about getting work?" she asked, her dear face clouded at the thought that I had to assume the great responsibility of taking care of a family of five while yet so young.

"I don't know why I am going," I answered frankly. "I simply feel that it is necessary for me to go. My impressions are rarely wrong, you know."



"No! I am not insane!"

"That is true," she answered, as she sat down beside me, relating experience after experience while I finished my breakfast.

What my mother told me of my past success at seeing into the future encouraged me, and I started out to walk the thirty-six blocks which separated our little home from the center of the city in a more hopeful frame of mind. I always walked down to save the nickel carfare, so that I was used to the exercise, and did not feel fatigue, being down town before I realized it, so busy was I with my thoughts and speculations. I was walking along the main business street, wondering why I had come down, when suddenly from all sides came the call of "Extra! Extra!" as several newsboys rushed from the alley back of the largest newspaper office in the city. Before I knew it I had purchased a paper and was reading the following headlines:

"MISS FERN NEWBERRY MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARS.

"CLEMENT BOSWELL, HER FORMER FIANCE, ARRESTED ON SUSPICION.

"THE GIRL'S MOTHER UPHOLDS HIS INNOCENCE."

I read the article from start to finish with keen interest, as both parties were of the highest social rank, Clement Boswell being an author of note, besides being a wealthy mine owner, while Miss Newberry was a noted beauty and society bell. The article stated that Miss Newberry had left her mother's home the evening before, and had last been seen by the janitor of the Weston Apartments as she was struggling to free herself from Mr. Boswell, who was trying to draw her back into his apartment. The girl had escaped him, rushing past the janitor, telling him she had been insulted. Boswell, running after her, had evaded the janitor, who tried to hold him back. Mr. Boswell seemed to be laboring under a great excitment, returning only the following morning bespotted with mud. This fact caused the police to arrest the noted clubman on suspicion as soon as the frantic mother had notified them of her daughter's disappearance. Mrs. Newberry, alone of all those who heard the story of the struggle in the hall of the apartment house, upheld Boswell's innocence, pleading that he be released. Suspicion, however, was too strong against the young man who refused to give any explanation concerning the girl's presence in his bachelor apartments, or of her pleading and struggles and his pursuit, the result of which he also refused to give. Neither would he account for his absence of the night and the condition of his clothes and of his touring car when he returned in the early morning. He, therefore, was arrested, while the police investigated the case and continued the search for the missing girl. The reason suspicion was so strong against Boswell was because of a quarrel between Miss Newberry and himself some three weeks before, which had resulted in the breaking of their engagement.

The article further contained lengthy descriptions of the principals, of Mr. Boswell's success as a writer, as well as of the happy strike a man he had grubstaked had made some six years before in a Cripple Creek mine, making him independently rich. As to the girl, her long stay in India, her open belief in the Hindoo philosophy, all made the subject of long descriptions and comment, but the main news, as usual, was to be found in the headlines, Miss Newberry had disappeared, Clement Boswell was arrested, and Mrs. Newberry defended the accused man.

Suddenly the thought came to me, startling as a bolt of lightning! Why not offer to unearth the mystery and give the paper the exact facts! Without hesitation I retraced my steps and walked up to the editorial department of the paper that had issued the extra. I asked for the editor.

"City or managing editor?" asked the young man I questioned.

"I don't know," I replied. "Whom must I see to obtain a position on the paper?"

"The city editor is busy just now with the Newberry-Boswell affair. I guess you'd better see Mr. Wilson, the managing editor, though there is small chance of your getting on the paper, as we already carry more reporters than we need."

"I can at least try."

"Certainly. I will show you the managing editor's office."

A few minutes later I entered the private office of the editor, having thanked the young reporter who had shown me the way. The office was like the office of any newspaper, a busy disorder reigning everywhere, papers littering the floor, waste-basket full to overflowing. This I caught at a glance, then my eyes fell on the editor himself. He was reading proofs, a small boy waiting for them. I waited until he had finished, which gave me the opportunity to examine the man more closely, and I found myself unconsciously admiring the bright mass of his curly brown hair and his clearly cut profile.

"There you are, kid," he finally said to the waiting boy, who hurried from the room with the corrected proofs, then he turned to me, and I caught the pleasant gleam of his dark blue eye as he asked, "Anything I can do for you?"

"Yes, sir. I would like a position as reporter on your paper."

"I am sorry, but we have need of no one at present. You can leave your name and references, and we will put you on the waiting list."

"I have no references," I admitted, somewhat abashed.

"Oh, I see. You are trying to break into the profession," he answered good-naturedly. "Well, that makes the possibility of your having a position on this paper all the more remote, since we make it a practice to employ only experienced people."

I did not know it at the time, but Mr. Wilson was wasting more time on me than was his custom with other would-be reporters, with the solicitations of whom the big daily was constantly deluged.

"How do you know that I am not capable if you don't give me a trial?" I asked more boldly, encouraged perhaps by the kindly light in his eyes.

"You may be very capable, but there are tricks in all trades, and we are too busy to teach them to beginners. You must get your experience on a smaller paper."

Almost before I thought I asked:

"Was it an experienced reporter who wrote up the Newberry affair?"

"Certainly?" a surprised question in his voice.

"Well, sir, I must admit I could have done better than that."

For a second he looked at me to make sure that I was serious, then, when he saw there was not the least twinkle in my eye, he laughed outright as he questioned:

"In what way could you have improved on the article?"

"I would have given more news than that contained in the headlines. I would have told whether the young lady was living or dead, where she was, and why she had disappeared."

"You would!" again he laughed. "And how would you have gotten the information?" he quizzed, after his merriment had subsided a little.

"I don't know how, but I would have gotten it or you would never have seen me again. I would be too ashamed to return if I could do no better than repeat what everybody knew."

It was evident Mr. Wilson was interested, by the manner in which he looked at me, for, being very slender and a little undersized, I looked much younger than I really was.

"So that's the spirit with which you would work?" he asked thoughtfully.

"Yes, sir."

"I tell you what I'll do," he said suddenly, after a pause. "If you get me the correct whereabouts of Miss Fern Newberry, with the reason why she left home, before any other paper gets it, I will give you a place on the Herald, and will pay you the highest salary we are giving our reporters."

"Very well, sir. How soon do you want this?"

"As soon as you can get it. Only remember, it must be before the other papers print the story."

"That goes without saying. I will get to work at once. Good morning." I bowed and left, feeling sure that I was leaving a very much interested as well as surprised man behind me.

When I reached home and told my mother what I done, she looked at me in astonishment, saying:

"Why, child, how could you make such a promise! How can you, almost a stranger in this big city, find out what older and experienced reporters failed to unearth?"

"I will find it out as I do most things, by letting the inner voice lead me. To-morrow morning I will know where to go for the information."

She said no more. I had done so many strange things in the past that she had come to have a blind trust in my powers. I went to bed that night, nervous and restless, it being near morning before I could fall into an uneasy slumber. Suddenly I was awakened by a strange, unearthly call, which caused me to sit up in bed alert and wide awake. Then there flashed through my consciousness the order to leave that morning for Pueblo, where I would find the information I wanted. I don't doubt but that the common run of people will think me very foolish and over-credulous when I state that I left on the first train for Pueblo, not knowing where I was going or what I was going to find, trusting blindly to my psychic powers.

I reached Pueblo in a half-doubting frame of mind, wondering what had pushed me to come so far on a mere intuition. I must own, however, that a force outside of my own volition seemed to push me onward, controlling, as it were, my every action. As I walked aimlessly about the streets, a sign of "Housekeeping Apartments For Rent," caught my eye. I paused suddenly, without knowing why. Then, when I tried to walk on, something seemed to stop me, drawing me toward the stairway, the mysterious power or attraction which had taken possession of me with the first reading of the Newberry-Boswell mystery seeming to force me up those stairs. I finally yielded to the strange influence, walking up the two flights of stairs, pausing before a door on which were the words written in gold letters: "Princess Zithenza, Clairvoyant."

I knocked. A soft, pleasant voice called from within, "Come in."

I entered. In the semi-darkness of the unusually elegantly furnished apartment, the shades being lowered, I distinguished a white form clad in flowing robes, standing out ghostlike against the dark background of some red portieres, the face shining pale and calm beneath the reflection of a costly lamp hanging from the ceiling. Nothing can picture the uncanny effect this strange woman in white produced upon the mind, already on the alert for something wonderful and supernatural. I can not say I was afraid, yet I stepped back, undecided whether to leave or stay, when the mysterious woman said:

"Come in and close the door. I was expecting you."

CHAPTER II.

THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

I CLOSED the door, as she had ordered, and took two steps into the room, then paused, uneasy and oppressed. Who was this woman who so calmly told me she was expecting me? Was it in answer to her call that I had come so far? She was beautiful and young, yet there was something uncanny about her. I was not given much time to think, since, after a few seconds during which she looked at me closely, she pointed to a seat saying:

"Have a seat, and I will try to explain to you why and how you came here."

I took the seat indicated, while she let herself sink upon a couch piled high with cushions. As I sat down, I asked, my curiosity getting the better of my timidity:

"Did I hear correctly that you were expecting me?"

"Yes, since I called you to me."

"You called me? What for?"

"That you might tell the world the reason why Fern Newberry left home and sweetheart and mother, trying to pass herself off for dead."

"You know where Miss Newberry is?" I asked, rising to my feet in sudden excitement.

"Yes, since I am she."

"You!" Astonishment caused me to drop back to the seat from which I had risen, then the thought that the woman was insane flashed through my brain, causing me to cast an uneasy glance toward the door.

"No," she said, reading my thought, "I am not insane, and if you will take time to examine me more closely you will see that I am telling the truth."

Speaking, she stretched forth her arm and touched the electric switch on the wall. The room was suddenly flooded with a flow of light which for an instant caused me to blink unsteadily until my eyes became used to the brilliant glare. Then, for the first time, I saw clearly the mysterious woman who had appeared so ghostlike beneath the softened rays of the Oriental lamp which had brought out the wondrous beauty of the features in such a dim, uncertain way. In the flash of a second I recognized, in spite of the barbarous headgear and Oriental robes, the proud society belle whose picture I had seen only the day before in that notable extra which had announced her disappearance and the arrest of her former sweetheart, Clement Boswell.

"You are convinced," she said, after a second's pause. Then she turned off the light, and we were again in the mysterious shadows and half-lights which had greeted me when I first entered the room.

"Yes, I believe you are indeed Miss Newberry, but how——?"

She did not let me finish my question, interrupting with the remark made hurriedly, betraying for the first time the excitement concealed up to this time by the calm languor of her pose and voice:

"I had you called that I might answer that question. Wait a second until I collect my thoughts."

She remained with half-closed eyes, utterly unconscious of my presence, her soul evidently far away, roaming in the unfathomable realms of thoughts where her sick spirit loved to linger.

"Isn't it queer," she finally muttered to herself, without looking at me, pressing her hands over her brow as though to still the chaos in her brain, "that my thoughts leave me suddenly like that!"

A strange impression stole over me as I sat looking at her, watching the ever-changing play of the mobile features. Though I knew she was a living, breathing woman, still in the flesh, I felt she was more spirit than human, more of the other world than of this. At last, oppressed by the heavy silence of that room which seemed peopled with strange, unseen presences, I asked, wishing to hear the sound of a human voice:

"Did I understand you to say that you had called me to you to give me the story of your disappearance?"

That question seemed to bring Miss Newberry back to reality. She sat up with a start, a half-smile, a mere shadow that fluttered for an instant across the lips, relieving the face of its troubled lines.

"Ah, I remember now," she said, more to herself than to me. "I beg your pardon, I had almost forgotten your presence. Those lapses of memory come to me now and then, and I am unable to account for them." Answering my question, she continued, "Yes, I called you, and it was in answer to that call that you had the interview with Mr. Wilson, that you left Denver for Pueblo, and came directly to me."

"How could you do this?" I asked, more astonished than ever.

"Through the aid of your spirit guides and mine," she answered, without seeming conscious that she was advancing anything strange or surprising.

"My spirit guides! Then you are a believer in spiritualism!"

"My belief extends further than that, since it embraces both this world and the next, both Heaven and earth, man and God, body and soul. I am a follower of the great Hindoo Seer, Yodi II., and his belief includes and extends beyond all that the Western world knows of in the psychic and supernatural. It is not necessary for the clearness of the story I am about to relate to enter deeply into the wonderful worship of Yodi II. All that is necessary for you and the general public to know, is that its adepts have the power to bring them whom or what they want, that they can read the future for this life as well as for the lives to come. We live in spirit, not in matter, we are more soul than body. The things of this life do not affect us, since we know that there are many more lives to come in which the errors of this will be corrected and rearranged, until we learn to reach the science of being, and find Heaven, the true Heaven of peace and love and happiness, in the companionship of our soul mates. I know that this happiness will not be mine in this present life, I, therefore, must wait until my reincarnation before he and I can meet again. Are you, therefore, surprised that I long for the time when I will be allowed to leave this present body and assume the new one, that one which will belong once more to my darling?"

She had risen, full of excitement, her eyes sparkling, her voice quivering with emotion. She was wondrously beautiful as she spoke thus, but to me, who did not know of the unhealthy dream in which the high-strung, nervous girl had lived for the past five years, it seemed she was demented and not responsible for what she said or did. Still, I had enough of the inborn newspaper instinct in me to know that all she was telling me contained the making of a splendid story, which would startle Denver social circles and be the making of me as a newspaper woman. I, therefore, questioned as she paused for a second in her excited talk:

"Then you do not consider Mr. Boswell your soul mate, since you have broken your engagement with him?"

"Oh, no! He belongs to a much lower plane than I. I have broken all the bonds which fettered my soul to the chains of custom and to the call of senses, while he is yet a slave to both. My soul will soon pass out of this body and roam at large in absolute freedom until the time is ripe for it again to assume a mortal form."

"You mean that you are going to die!" I cried, feeling more and more convinced that the beautiful girl, whether she was Miss Newberry or some one else, was hopelessly insane.

"There is no death for such as I. I may pass out of this body, yet I shall live on and on throughout eternity. But," and a sudden she became a normal everyday creature again, her face losing its exalted light, "this is not telling you the correct story of my disappearance, which will free the innocent Clement Boswell of all blame."

She was silent for a few seconds, lost in thought, and I, somehow feeling I was not to interrupt these thoughts, waited patiently until she was ready to speak. Suddenly she said, as though answering my mental question:

"I was thinking how much of my past life I had to tell you in order that you might understand my present course of action. I find that I must begin with my visit to India, five years ago, since it was during that trip that I met my fate!"

She paused again, and though my curiosity was aroused to the highest point I again felt it was not wise to interrupt. She resumed, after a time, throwing herself back on the pillows of the couch, her beautiful, ethereal head resting on one of her white, bare arms, her slender form gracefully stretched on the couch, her eyes fixed afar, seeing back into the past, which her words, spoken in a low, agitated voice, recalled so vividly to her heart and soul:

"It was five years ago last December that my parents and myself, in company with Major Willmont and his daughter Lydia, landed in India, in that strange, mysterious city of Bombay, which, from the first minute I beheld it, gained such sway over my soul. It was only afterward that I knew why it thus affected me, it not being given me at that time to remember my past lives?"

"Do you remember them now?" escaped from me in astonishment.

"Yes, several incarnations, all those I shared with him," she finished dreamily, that shadowy smile of which I have already spoken lighting for a second the solemn contours of her face.

"Him? Whom do you mean by him?" I asked, struck by the lingering tenderness of her voice as she pronounced the word.

"My soul mate," she answered. Then again returning to reality, she added: "I will now tell you how I met and lost him in this life. We had been in Bombay about three months, when one morning as Lydia Willmont and I were out riding in our sedan chairs carried by two natives, I saw walking down the street what to me was the most wondrously handsome man I had even seen, though Lydia would not have it thus, saying he was simply an ordinary Hindoo fortune-teller. But then she did not see the soul as I did, that sister soul which from birth had been calling mine."

She must have caught the surprised, perhaps uneasy, light in my eye, for she paused in her description with the apology:

"Pardon me. I keep forgetting that you have not studied the mysteries of the soul as I have, and are therefore unprepared to understand the meaning of my words."

"Your story is wonderfully interesting, even if it is strange," I hastened to assure her. "Please go on."

"The minute he saw me, he, too, was struck to the very depths of his soul, though he being farther advanced than I in the science of mind, realized with the first glance that I was his soul mate whom he was meeting for the first time in his present incarnation. He paused until we had gone by, standing looking after us until we had disappeared at a turning of the narrow street down which our native carriers were taking us on the way to the park. I returned home that day, still under the spell of the meeting, Lydia laughingly announcing at the dinner table that night that Fern had fallen in love with a Hindoo fortune-teller.

"I went to bed early, wishing to be alone to reason out for myself the cause of my strange unrest, but the more I thought, the less could I understand why this meeting should have affected me thus. Toward morning I fell asleep. Then in my dreaming consciousness, now that the material body was at rest, I saw again the haunting stranger. He seemed to be bending over me, his face almost touching mine, his breath fanning my cheek as he gave the mysterious order: 'Tomorrow morning at ten, by the gate of the park.' Then the vision vanished and I awoke with a start.

"At ten I was at the spot indicated, and there I found the stranger waiting for me. He did not address me, contenting himself with looking at me as I passed in my sedan chair. For a week these appointments and meetings continued daily, first in one part of the city then in the other, yet the stranger never spoke or indicated in any way that he had called me to him through those mysterious messages given my soul during sleep. Then the true meeting came in the flesh, and my fate was forever sealed. It came about in this way.

"One night, instead of the usual appointment, the vision ordered: 'Remain home today. I will come to you.' I wondered how this could be done, since my father and Major Willmont had rented a furnished house, and the two families lived together in the enjoyment of a home, though kept by business in this foreign country which no one liked but me. There was a sort of understanding between my father and Major Willmont that I was to marry him, though he was some twenty years my senior, his daughter and I being almost of an age. I had been told of the arrangement, and not loving any one else, I had neither consented nor refused, letting events take their course, with that carelessness of youth yet untouched by love. With such an arrangement, you can guess that I wondered how it would be possible for the stranger to enter our home and meet me, since Major Willmont, like all old men in love with a young woman, was very jealous. Still I waited hopefully, though full of nervous excitement. About five, as I was standing looking out of my window, I saw the stranger enter the gate, walking with resolute footsteps toward the house. He was faultlessly clad in the latest European style, his dark beauty seeming out of place in those common, everyday clothes. My heart stood still, and I waited breathlessly excited, sure that he would be refused admittance; but contrary to my expectation he was admitted, and from the library below I could hear my father and Major Willmont talking with the stranger in cordial conversation. For over two hours they talked thus, until I was nearly wild with nervousness and curiosity, wondering if the stranger would leave before I had a chance to speak with him. Then father's voice called me to come down, and I knew that the vision of the night before had not lied. I descended to the library, full of emotion, almost of fear, my father formally introducing me to Prince Zithenza."

"Zithenza!" I cried startled. "Is not that the name under which you go now, Miss Newberry?"

"I have the right to that name, since I am Prince Zithenza's widow."

"Widow! Then he is dead!"

"He died ten minutes after making me his wife."

She said this calmly, almost indifferently, as though speaking of an event which affected some other life than hers. I asked in astonishment:

"How did he die?"

"I am going to tell you. That night Prince Zithenza stayed to dinner, leaving me at his departure completely under his spell, the attraction of the first meeting on the streets having changed with the first touch of our hands into an all-conquering love which death itself could not end, since it is destined to live throughout the ages to come. That meeting was followed by many others, since Prince Zithenza had some business connections with the big deal which had brought father and the Major to India, and the three were in almost daily conference. One day the Prince, who had partaken often of our hospitality, invited us to dinner at his home, which was said to be the most regal in Bombay. The invitation was eagerly accepted, since neither my parents nor Major Willmont guessed how deep was my interest in the stranger. It was during that visit that Prince Zithenza first spoke of love."

She paused suddenly, her head dropping back on the cushions as though she were overcome with fatigue, her heavy lids closed over the mysterious eyes. Then she added, in explanation of her strange actions:

"Please excuse me. I feel I must rest for a few minutes, since what I have to say is most nerve-racking, and I must have all my strength if I wish to finish my story."

I told her to take her time about going on with her story, and we remained in silence while she regained her strength.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEATH OF THE SOUL MATE.

SUDDENLY she opened her eyes, and continued as though there had been no interruption:

"I cannot tell you how impatiently I awaited the time appointed for that fateful dinner, since, in a subconscious way, I knew it was destined to change the whole course of my life. While my parents, as well as my elderly sweetheart, wondered at my nervousness, no one guessed the cause, all thinking that the trying climate affected my nerves. Well, the evening finally arrived. We were admitted into the mysterious beauties of Prince Zithenza's palace, which was considered one of the most sumptuous in Bombay. The Prince, clad in magnificent robes, ensigns of his rank and dignity, greeted us with perfect courtesy. The dinner which followed was in keeping with the fairylike place—silent, noiseless-footed servants, dainty viands, delicious wines—everything was there to lull the senses into a semi-somnolence of dreamy comfort.

"After the meal, the men repaired to the terrace to smoke, and my mother, Lydia, and I descended to the inner court to explore its alluring beauties. Mother soon tired and took a seat, while Lydia returned to lose herself in the contemplation of some art treasures which we had passed on our way to the interior garden and which she wanted to see more closely. I, therefore, found myself wandering alone amid the flower-bordered paths of this inner court, which had the size of an ordinary outdoor garden. Suddenly I was startled out of my languid dream by some one calling my name. I turned. The Prince was standing some ten feet away, his arms extended, his face transfigured with love.

"'Fern,' he repeated, and I, docile as a babe running to its mother's arms, advanced to him and dropped into those extended arms. He held me to him for a second, his lips touching my brow in a pure kiss. Then he led me to a nearby rustic bench, where we sat down together and with his hands holding mine, he told me of his love, that love which had been mine throughout many incarnations, which would still be mine through many more. He explained in a brief, concise manner the entire philosophy of his belief, proving to me conclusively that he was indeed my soul mate. When he had finished his explanations concerning the past, he began to talk of the future.

"'Through my studies and meditations,' he said, in substance, 'I have learned to read the future. Therefore, I know just what is in store for the both of us. To you it will seem tragic and terrible, but I knowing that the trials of each life purchase the contentment of the one to come, am ready to face my destiny without flinching. I have hesitated about telling you what is in store for both of us, but I feel that it is best that you should know, so that the shock may not prove too much for your soul and cause it to leave the body before its time, thereby making for you a bad karma and for me untold difficulties to bring about that perfect union of soul and body which is promised us in the life to come.'

"At the time he spoke thus, I could only dimly perceive his meaning, as, no doubt, is the case with you as you now hear me repeat his words. Later, after I studied his books and writings, I knew just what he meant, and thanked him for having warned me against the danger of self-destruction, which, in my first bitter grief over his tragic death, haunted me almost to the point of madness. But I am getting away from my story, and I know you are anxious to hear the end.

"'Within two weeks,' he continued, 'by the laws of the land and through the will of God, you shall be my wife.'

"'Your wife!' I interrupted, in sudden emotion.

"'Yes, but within ten minutes after the ceremony I shall be dead, killed by the man who professes to love you and who will never forgive the one who takes you from him.'

"'Major Willmont?' I questioned, in breathless emotion, feeling in my heart of hearts that what he said was possible, as the jealous old man who hoped to possess youth and beauty would never forgive the one who took them from him. Prince Zithenza nodded in assent, and I continued, wishing to have a chance to fight for my happiness, 'Knowing this, is there no way to escape him?'

"'None, since he is but the instrument of fate.'

"'Then why should we marry, if this marriage is to be the cause of your death and my immediate widowhood?'

"'Because this marriage is necessary to prepare for us that happy, cloudless life together in our next incarnation,' he answered. Then he continued with his revelation of the future. 'Tomorrow I shall make a formal demand for your hand of your father, though I know he will indignantly refuse it, almost driving me from his home, accusing me of being a mere adventurer who wishes to gain social prestige by a marriage to a cultured white woman. As soon as I am thus refused, I will make immediate preparations for our marriage. Two weeks from tonight you will join me here, where a minister of your faith will be in attendance to marry us, all the legal formalities having been complied with. Then, with our first as well as our last love kiss while in this body, I will leave you, only to meet you again in that other life where we will both be born white!'"

"White!" I cried. "Then he was a negro!"

Miss Newberry started at the sound of my voice as though I had suddenly awakened her from a dream. She looked at me for an instant without seeming to grasp my meaning. Then she replied, like one returning to reality:

"He was a Hindoo of white and black parentage."

"And you loved him!" broke from me before I thought.

She was not offended by the evident horror expressed in my exclamation, answering with a faintly sneering smile:

"Yes, with a love such as you and your like will not feel or understand for many lives to come, the love of soul for soul, which loves neither color, face, nor form, but spirit—that great I AM which is perfect, pure, infinite."

Abashed, without knowing why, I hastened to explain, stumbling awkwardly over my words:

"I assure you, Miss Newberry, that I did not mean anything personal, I ——"

She interrupted in the same calm, unruffled voice which had surprised me all the way through her narrative:

"Don't think for a minute that anything of this world and its prejudices can offend me. I am above all those things, remaining on earth, to which I no longer belong, merely because the time for my departure has not yet arrived." Then rapidly, "But I must finish my story before I forget what I have to tell. I can so little depend upon my memory."

"'I will leave you now, Fern,' continued the Prince, 'to join the others, who will soon wonder at my prolonged absence. I am supposed to be looking up some papers for your father, but even then I cannot remain away too long. After tomorrow we will not have any more opportunities to meet in the flesh, but every night my spirit will come to speak to yours, giving you instructions what to do. Tomorrow I will send you some books to read, and these will explain more fully my belief in life."

"He pressed me to him for the last time, and left me dazed and weak, unable to think or collect my thoughts.

"Here I find a break in my recollections, there lingering in my memory a dim remembrance of my being carried home and put to bed, a doctor summoned, and a general state of excitement and suspense reigning in the home. My next conscious moment was the following day, when Zithenza came to the house to make, as he had told me he would, a formal demand for my hand in marriage. Needless to say he was refused being almost driven from the house, as he had warned me he would, Major Willmont, whom father told of the man's impertinence, swearing that he would shoot him on sight if he ever dared come again to the house or address me in any way. My mother told me of this as she came up to bring me something to eat. That night I spent reading the books which the Prince had sent me in most mysterious manner during the day, finishing them only at dawn, when I fell asleep from exhaustion.

"The next night, in the same mysterious manner, I found another book by my bedside with the penciled note, 'Read every word, and learn the wisdom of the ages, wisdom which will aid you to fathom the problems of this life and the lives to come.' I read the new volume more eagerly than I had those of the night before, falling asleep only after it was finished and the early morning sunshine entered my open window. This continued for ten days, my nights spent in the study of the strange cult to which Prince Zithenza belonged, living only on one or two hours' sleep, sustained by a nervous excitation which nothing can describe, but which daily wasted my strength, causing me to lose flesh in a most alarming degree, my eyes appearing large and strange in my white, thin face. My poor mother became alarmed, my father anxious, Major Willmont jealous, since he, alone of my immediate circle, guessed nearest right the cause of the change which daily became more marked.

"The books came each day in the same mysterious manner, though I afterward suspected that my maid had been bribed to bring them to me. The more I read, the more did I become reconciled to that marriage which Prince Zithenza had told me was to end in his death, since I knew that this marriage was the preparatory link to the other union which was truly to unite me to my beloved in the coming incarnation.

"The night appointed for our marriage finally arrived, and I was ready. I received in the early morning from the Prince minute instructions as to what he expected of me, and I followed them to the letter, leaving my father's home during the dead of night and hastening to the spot where he told me a sedan chair and some native carriers awaited me. I entered the chair, and the natives made off at a rapid trot, none of us noticing that we were being followed.

"I reached the Prince's home safely, and there I found the American clergyman the Prince had promised to secure, and thus we were married. The Prince and I accompanied the minister to the door, where we bade him farewell. When he was gone, Zithenza turned to me with extended arms, saying:

"'One love kiss before I die!'

"I dropped into those extended arms and our lips met. Just then the door burst open, and Major Willmont rushed in upon us, his eyes glaring in mad jealousy. Zithenza, who knew what was coming, pushed me from him and turned to face his half-insane rival. Before I had time to utter a cry, a shot rang out, and Prince Zithenza fell dying to the floor, saying as he fell, 'Until our next incarnation!' As I rushed to him, Major Willmont turned his gun upon me, ready, no doubt, to kill me, too, but one of the Prince's servants, attracted by the first shot, rushed in from a side door, disarmed him on the spot, Major Willmont dropping beside his victim, as I thought, dead. The sight of those two bodies side by side caused a mad terror to take possession of me. I rushed from the house of death, running madly through the deserted streets, dropping in a dead faint in the hall of my father's home.

"Then followed weeks and weeks during which I hovered between life and death, Major Willmont living just long enough to tell my father how he came to be shot; though the exact story never got in the papers, the reason given for the double tragedy being a quarrel over business matters, my name not even being mentioned, so that only my parents, the Major's daughter, Lydia, the minister who married me to the Prince, and the Hindoo servant who killed Willmont knew the exact truth of the two tragic deaths.

"As soon as I was strong enough to travel, my parents took me to Europe, and there we remained traveling almost constantly for four years in the hope that my health, impaired by the shock, might be restored. My memory remained a blank concerning the deaths which had almost wrecked my life. I could remember everything up to the time of the fateful dinner in Prince Zithenza's home —after that utter oblivion. Thus did I live for four years. Then I met Clement Boswell."

Miss Newberry paused for a second, tired by the long story just related, but she presently resumed, noticing, no doubt, how curious and impatient I was to hear of the more recent romance of her life:

"It was in Nice, where we were spending the winter following my father's death, that I first met Clement. Having forgotten all about my love affair and subsequent marriage to Prince Zithenza, I naturally did not object when he began paying attention to me, my poor mother rejoicing to think that I was becoming normal again after those four years of illness.

"When he asked me to marry him, I accepted without hesitation, for Clement Boswell is a most charming man, cultured, refined, and lovable, such a man any woman would be proud to marry. We became engaged, returning to Denver together. Society took me up immediately, first because of my mothr's social standing, then because of my sweetheart's position and fame, as well as for my own sake.

"Every time Mr. Boswell urged me to set a date for our marriage, my mother would make some excuse, saying that there was plenty of time. He patiently waited a year, but finally the time came when I was forced to set the date, and I did so willingly, looking forward to my marriage with pleasant anticipations, still unconscious of that lonely grave back in Bombay where rested my real and only mate.

"Thus did time pass, until four weeks ago, when I awoke with a sudden shock to a complete remembrance of the past—therefore, an overpowering horror of the present. It came about in this way. As my wedding day was drawing nearer, I decided one stormy afternoon to go up to the trunk-room and sort out my effects, destroying those I did not want, and repacking those I intended taking with me to my new home. While looking through an old trunk which we had brought back with us from India, I suddenly came upon the volumes Prince Zithenza had given me during the two weeks which had preceded my marriage to him. The minute my eyes encountered those books, I remembered everything, and with a cry of agony I swooned.

"After that I remember nothing clearly. It seems that there was a quarrel, or at least a scene between Clement Boswell, my mother and myself. I think I returned his ring to him, but even that I am not sure of."

She paused allowing her heavy lids to cover her tired eyes. It was evident she did not intend to say more. Still, to me, there were many things I must know, so I questioned, wishing to force her to give me the missing details in spite of her evident fatigue:

"Do you not remember how you left your home and came here?"

With evident effort she opened her eyes and looked at me with a strange faraway look I shall never forget, then she answered:

"Left home? Come here? I don't understand. Am I not home? Is this not Denver?"

Again her eyes closed, and this time I realized, with some alarm and uneasiness, that she had fallen asleep, one of those strange, sudden sleeps with which I afterward knew she was affected when a change of personality was about to come upon her.

I tried to awaken her, but all my efforts were vain, so, thoroughly frightened, thinking that perhaps she was dead, I rushed from the room, calling for help as I rang madly for the landlady.

This strange story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

APRIL FOOLISHNESS.

She had a goodly parasol—
  I don't presume to rule her;
But with the time I felt a call
  To try to "April fool" her.

And so I fixed its handle then
  To an old, well split cover—
I smiled to guess her feelings when
  She'd find those rents above her.

That April day she came downtown—
  It rained, the wind was blowing.
She in my office sat her down
  To wait my homeward going.

I kept my laughter strictly "sleeved"
  How neatly fooled I thought her!
My own umbrella, I believed,
  Would shield us from the water.

But when I raised it at the door
  I lost that vain illusion;
Both hers and mine were useless, for
  She'd schemed to my confusion!

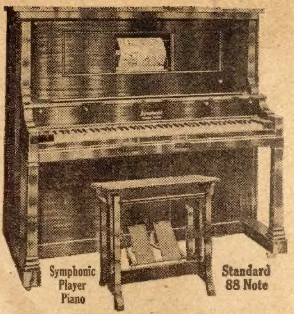
I looked at her, she looked at me,
  Then through the stormy weather
We hastened home in company—
  Two April fools together!

* * *

Consulting His Comfort.

"You encourage your boy to use slang?"

"Well, I don't exactly encourage him. But I must admit that he causes me less personal annoyance than my daughter, who is constantly criticising my grammar."



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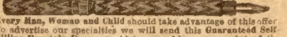

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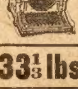

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Frontivard, the Terrible

Or, Brothers of the Red -:- By Stephen Gaillard

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Begun in No. 12, March 21. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

[Author's Note:—With the final defeat and elimination of the Brothers of the Red through the unceasing efforts of that modern band of vigilantes known as the Invisible Tribunal, there passed into oblivion the most dangerous and dreaded criminal organization that ever defied the forces of law and order. Above the ordinary level of the powers that prey, the Brothers constituted a powerful, murderous, far-reaching society against whose activities the ordinary machinery of the law proved ineffectual. To cope successfully with these wily foes of civilization, arose the league known as the Invisible Tribunal, the membership of which consisted of men drawn from all walks of life, but selected individually for courage, determination, and fidelity to the oaths they swore for the protection of society by fair means or foul. From the memoirs of their most formidable agent, Cesare Frontivard, and his comrade, Edmund Reverdy, is taken the strange record of events herein set forth.]

FRONTIVARD'S JEST.

IT WAS a warm evening in the beginning of October; so sultry indeed was the air that but for the red and gold and crimson of the trees and the rustle of fallen leaves upon the pavement it might have seemed an evening of midsummer. The full moon shone down through the haze of autumn and cast an eerie spell even over the seemingly prosaic thoroughfares of the great city. North Dearborn street is not an unhandsome street even in garish daylight. On this night it was like a scene enchanted.

On the east side of the street stood a certain brownstone mansion — three stories and basement — once the abode of opulence and luxury, now fallen upon evil days and become the victim of that commercialism through which its original owner had made his fortune. The "Rooms for Rent" sign, indeed, never appeared in its front windows: but that was merely owing to the fact that its lessee preferred a more select method of securing tenants for his apartments. It was perhaps owing to the same select method that the apartments were occupied by persons of rather striking personalities and that the personnel of the tenants changed but seldom. There was, for instance, Mr. Pembroke Carroll who occupied the second floor front and a rear room adjoining, and who was perhaps the most remarkable of all the inmates of the house. The landlord, who lived in the basement, the landlord's wife and mother-in-law, had nearly wrecked a trio of not overly brilliant intellects in trying to fathom Mr. Pembroke Carroll, and had finally given over the problem in despair. They had at last come to accept him at his face value, which was to them a very exorbitant rent promptly paid, and to consider his long and unexplained absences and suddenly and equally unexplained returns, his tantalizingly locked door, to which he alone possessed the key, his impenetrable reserve, his plenitude of funds, as part of the insoluble mystery of life. They had, indeed, for about a year, considered him in the light of a high-class crook, whose name they would some day see in the morning papers in connection with some gigantic swindle or audacious robbery, but, as the expected event did not transpire, they had finally dropped the conjecture as unsatisfactory.

On this pleasant October evening Pembroke Carroll had not deemed it necessary to switch on the electric light, and a ray of moonlight streaming in at the open window penetrated just far enough into the apartment to gild the telephone instrument which stood upon a corner of the flat-topped desk nearly in the center of the room. In so far as they were revealed by the ray of moonlight, the furnishings of the chamber appeared very simple — almost ascetic — yet elegant. A Persian rug upon a polished hardwood floor, several bookcases, pictures, a few busts and pieces of statuary, a filing cabinet surmounting a chest of drawers, which possessed a combination lock and a steel lining; these and a number of chairs, all massive and luxuriously upholstered, formed the setting of the room in which the occupant sat at ease in one of the massive chairs beside the open window.

To any one who could have looked in upon him from some secret coigne of vantage it might have seemed that he was not quite so much at ease as his attitude indicated, for there was an even grimmer gravity in the wide-set eyes and in the lines of the resolute mouth and chin than usually appeared there. Presently he arose, thrust his hands into his pockets, and paced thoughtfully up and down the chamber, puffing slowly at the cigar held at an angle between thin lips that served to accentuate the sternness of a not otherwise unhandsome countenance. Twice in his uneasy promenade he picked up the telephone instrument, held it in his hand for a moment irresolute, then set it down again. Presently he approached it again, with a decision of manner which indicated a mind made up; but just as he reached out his hand to pick up the instrument, the bell rang.

"Hello!" said Carroll, picking up the receiver.

This is what he heard:

"Frontivard, this is Reverdy!" There was a sound from the other end of the line as of a heavy body flung against a wall, then: "I am taken—Carlotto——" Then there was another and heavier crash and the circuit was broken.

Instantly every trace of indecision vanished from the manner of Cesare Frontivard, alias Mr. Pembroke Carroll. He flashed the operator and asked for the exchange manager.

"A call was just received on North 13," said Frontivard. "Can you tell me where it came from?"

"Why, were you cut off?"

"Yes."

"Then hang up and give the party a chance to call you back."

"No, no, no! He cannot call me back, I think his instrument is broken."

"Hold the wire and I will see if I can trace it."

After what seemed an interminable time the North manager came on the line again.

"Hello, North 13! That call you inquired about came from Riverside 960-A."

"Thank you. Good-by," and Frontivard hung up.

A moment later he called a certain number in Calumet.

"This you, Van Dorn?" he said to the party answering. "Have Brooks meet me in the park with the forty. Not there? Then who is? All right, send McIvor. Are any of our men about? No? Then send Mac alone, and tell him to lose no time, even if he has to burn up the machine. No; I can't wait for you to get more men—minutes mean life or death."

Frontivard hung up the receiver and set the instrument on the table. He then took a pistol from his pocket, looked to see if the magazine was filled, put on a crusher hat, took up a silver-mounted cane, and strolling over to the window, stood looking out into the hazy moonlight of the avenue. Presently he looked at his watch. "McIvor should be in the park by the time I get there," he said, and turned toward the door.

In a little while Frontivard entered the park and strolled along on the grass bordering one of the driveways leading toward the Zoo. He had not gone far when a big black touring car swung into the park from North Dearborn street and slowed up beside him. He turned, exchanged a nod of recognition with the driver, swung upon the running board without necessitating the stopping of the machine, and as he settled himself in the tonneau, said to McIvor: "To Riverside—pick streets where you can speed without getting caught." Then he leaned back in the cushioned seat, lighted a fresh cigar, and seemed lost in thought.

As the big black car whirled through little frequented streets toward Riverside, Frontivard's thoughts reviewed a certain night when he and Reverdy had played a tragic jest upon Carlotto and Lodge No. 13 of the "Reds"—a jest which Carlotto seemed bent upon repaying in equally tragic fashion; the knowledge which had come to him of Carlotto's escape from the Russian trap; Reverdy's whirlwind courtship—the Grizzly turned poet, dreamer, romantic as any Romeo; Bianca's beauty and adoration, well worthy of such a love; his own loneliness when his comrade's love for a woman had seemed to make him forget their ancient friendship; the wedding at noon that day at which he had been groomsman; his warning to Reverdy, unheeded in the floodtide of happiness—Reverdy seemed to forget that an agent of the Invisible Tribunal might not spend his honeymoon in such romantic solitude with his beloved as would have been safe enough for ordinary men; the telephone call which he had received but a little while ago, and its tragic interruption; and lo: the car was whirling along a highroad in Riverside.

Frontivard directed McIvor to a certain small villa, standing alone in a grove of oaks fully a quarter of a mile distant from any other house. As the machine drew up at the gate he saw the lower windows were lighted. A scene with less promise in it of tragedy than the moonlit grove and cozy villa could scarcely have been imagined.

The agent of the Invisible Tribunal leaped from the car, and, magazine pistol in hand, hurried to the house. The door stood open. Within, in the reception hall, the first object which met his gaze was a telephone box torn from the wall and lying upon the floor. The portieres in front of a door leading from a large livingroom had been torn down. Within the room was a broken chair, a table had been overturned, and the jardiniere which it had held lay shattered upon the floor, while the flowers it had contained lay crushed beneath it. The water from the jardiniere had streamed across the polished floor, until soaked up by a rug in the reception hall. The electric light had not been switched off and by its rays Frontivard examined the broken chair. There was blood on the back of it, and on a sharp angle some strands of hair—not Reverdy's, for he was fair.

Frontivard made a rapid but careful survey of every room in the house. It was empty. Reverdy and Bianca had disappeared, leaving no clew save the broken and bloody chair, the overturned table, the wrecked telephone.

Frontivard sat down in the reception hall to think. The great agent of the Invisible Tribunal was essentially a man of action and a man of intuition. Sometimes his intuitions partook almost of the nature of second sight. When he arose from the settee upon which he had seated himself there was such cold relentless purpose in his face of bronze as Carlotto and the "Reds," could they have seen it, might have taken as fair warning to look to themselves.

Returning to the car, he said to McIvor:

"Cover your lights. Now drive south: drive by unfrequented roads and drive hard. I will give you further directions as we go along."

McIvor turned the machine toward the south and threw the lever into the high, and the great black car leaped forward like a thing of vengeful life, its wheels seeming scarcely to touch the ground. Past stretches of shadowy woodland, out over the open, moonlit prairie it flew, swinging in toward the city as it careered southward. It was just twelve o'clock at night and the moon was past the zenith when McIvor brought the car to a stop in a clump of willows not a quarter of a mile from the lonely house where Frontivard and Reverdy had played their jest upon Lodge No. 13.

"McIvor," said Frontivard, "wait for me here until half-past one o'clock. If I do not come by then I will never come. Here, strike a match and set your watch with mine. Now good night."

Frontivard walked toward the wood in which the lonely house was concealed, keeping in the shelter of the trees which lined the houseless streets cut across the prairie far in advance of the tide of population. When the sheltering willows came to an end, he lay prone on the ground and crawled through the weeds like an Indian. In less than fifteen minutes he had reached the edge of the wood, and made his way cautiously toward the house. In front of it, as he peered forth from the shadow of the trees, he saw an automobile in which the driver and another man were sitting. He turned and stole around to the back of the house, still keeping in the shelter of the trees. At the back of the house there was a door which, as Frontivard saw joyfully, stood open, but against the wall beside it leaned a man.

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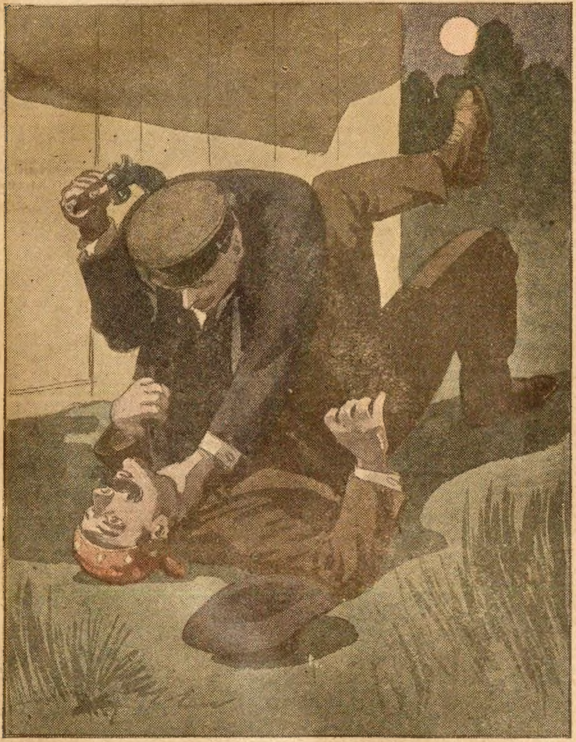
"Humph! well guarded," muttered Frontivard.

Then pulling the crusher hat a little lower over his eyes, he strode out from the shadow of the trees, swinging his cane nonchalantly as he advanced, and striking with it the tops from some weeds that grew in his way. The sentinel started from the wall, and the command, spoken in Italian, came sharp and menacing: "Throw up your hands!" Then: "Who are you?"

"Ah, my good man," said Frontivard, coolly, pretending not to understand, "I have lost my way in this beastly prairie, you know. Can you tell me how I can get back to the city?"

"Hands up!" repeated the sentinel, in English, "hands up, or I blowa da head off!" As he spoke he came close up to Frontivard and a revolver gleamed in his hand. Then he gasped with astonishment as he recognized the agent of the Invisible Tribunal. That momentary pause of recognition was his undoing. With lightning swiftness Frontivard struck him across the wrist with the swinging cane and the revolver dropped to the ground. The man groaned and clutched his injured wrist with his left hand. On the instant his adversary closed with him, flung him backward to the ground, his hand upon his throat, and reaching for the fallen revolver, struck him across the head with it with fearful force. The Italian fell back lifeless.



His hand was on his throat.

Frontivard rose, and going to the open door, entered it. He found himself in a long passage illuminated only by the moonlight that streamed through the opening. Feeling his way along the passage, he came to a door on the left-hand side. Trying the handle gently, he found it was unlocked, and entered what seemed an empty room. Here the darkness was complete, and the agent of the Invisible Tribunal drew a small electric torch from his pocket in order to look about him. As he did so he uttered a low exclamation of surprise. He was in a magazine of high explosives. There was enough giant powder, dynamite, and nitroglycerin in that room to blow up a small city. This was not what he was seeking, however, and he turned back toward the passage. As he did so he saw a long piece of fuse lying across some boxes of dynamite. He picked it up, and a grim smile flitted across his features: "A good jest," he muttered, in answer to his thoughts, "but useless."

He felt his way again along the passage until it turned to the left, and he heard a low murmur of voices. Peering cautiously around the corner, he saw that the passage ended in a door which stood slightly ajar. Treading with infinite caution, he approached this door and stood listening. The voices were indistinct, but among them he heard Reverdy's: "Do what you like with me, you fiends," his friend was saying, "but for God's sake, if any among you have mothers or sisters, let my wife go!" The answer was laughter and insult.

Frontivard turned and retraced his steps, treading lightly as a cat. Going to the room where the explosives were stored, he picked up the fuse he had noticed before. He made a quick mental calculation, and then cut off a piece which he judged would burn forty minutes. One end of this he buried in the top of a keg of giant powder which stood open, the other end he lighted. Then he picked up a can of nitroglycerin and retraced his steps toward the end of the passage.

Carlotto sat in his chair of office facing the assembled "Reds," while within the hollow square formed by the large table at which they sat stood Reverdy and Bianca, their hands bound to their sides. Carlotto was smiling; he was in humorous vein.

"Let your wife go, Signor Reverdy?" he was saying. "Oh, that is impossible, quite impossible! I will make it clear to you, Signor, why it is impossible. You are a brave man, Signor, no matter what physical torture we might inflict upon you, you would not flinch; but mental torture—ah, that is different! So we are going to inflict upon you a little mental torture before you die, and your wife will be the instrument—the victim. Do I make myself clear, Signor?"

Reverdy struggled with his bonds, exerting all his gigantic strength, but in vain.

"Do not exert yourself, Signor," said Carlotto. "Those cords will hold until we give you surer bonds of brick and mortar—the same from which we released our ill-fated brother San Benito, but too late." He paused for some moments to gloat upon his victims, while the men around the large table stirred as if impatient of this ghastly badinage. Then he went on: "We are joyous tonight, Signor, joyous in holding in our power one of our most dangerous enemies and the being most dear to him upon earth. Could we but see, standing beside you there, your friend and comrade, the accursed Frontivard, our cup of happiness would be filled to overflowing."

As if in answer to the words the door from the passage swung open. Carlotto turned his head to see who entered, and sprang to his feet staring as if he could not believe his eyes. From the throats of the men about the table burst a shout of fierce joy. Twenty stilettos flashed in the lamplight.

"Good evening, gentlemen," said Frontivard, suavely. "I am happy to see that I am welcome. But do not be too demonstrative," he added, as several of the men moved toward him, "for I have that in my hand which will not bear rough usage," and he held aloft the can of nitroglycerin.

The "Brothers of the Red" fell back from him as if he had been a leper, and their swarthy faces turned to a livid paleness. Reverdy looked upon his friend with joy, astonishment, and gratitude all mingled in his glance. Carlotto, with jaw dropped and staring eyes, queried hoarsely:

"In the name of the devil, how come you here? Have you nine lives like a cat that you dare again to brave us in the very room where you gave us such good cause to hate you?"

"I came," answered Frontivard, calmly, "over the dead body of your sentinel, who was a simpleton and deserved to die. As to how many lives I may have, I will presently put that to the test, if you dare to abide by it."

"What do you mean?" queried Carlotto.

"Just this, messieurs," said Frontivard, "you all know as well as I do that not thirty feet away is stored enough explosive to wreck a hundred buildings like this one, and in my hand I hold enough to wreck this room and kill every living being in it. Do you follow me? Do you realize that I hold all your lives in the hollow of my hand?"

"Yes, but at the sacrifice of your own," replied Carlotto.

"Quite true, my friend. Therefore I offer you these terms: Either let me go from here in safety with my friend and his wife, or I will fling this can upon the floor and test how many lives I have."

For several moments not a man answered, not a man moved. They all stood staring at Frontivard as if trying to read the depths of his inscrutable mind and find whether their terrible adversary possessed the desperate courage to carry out his threat.

"Come, come, gentlemen," he said at last. "I cannot wait all night. Decide, or I will decide for you," and he raised the can of nitroglycerin menacingly.

"We choose, we choose!" cried out a dozen voices. "Go free, and take your accursed friends with you."

"Very good," said Frontivard smiling, "cut those cords."

In an instant Reverdy and Bianca were freed. Reverdy stretched his numbed arms with an exclamation of joy, and stooping, picked up Bianca, who had sunk to the floor.

"Go out first with your wife," commanded Frontivard. "Carlotto, you and one of your men will follow me, and you others, remember what I hold in my hand, and that there is at least a ton of dynamite stored in this place."

Carlotto and one his men obeyed, following Frontivard as he backed along the passage, holding his electric torch in one hand and the can of nitroglycerin in the other. The "Reds" were completely cowed, as much by the dominant mind as by the desperate daring of the man. Once in the open air he compelled Carlotto and his companion to walk before him to the front of the building. The automobile with the two men in it was still standing at the door.

"Get out and crank up," said Frontivard, covering them with the magazine pistol.

The men hesitated. "Be quick!" cried Carlotto. "We are beaten. The fiend holds our lives at his mercy. See you not what he carries in his left hand? It is nitroglycerin."

The men got out and obeyed.

"Now, Reverdy," said Frontivard, "get in and turn the machine southward."

Reverdy obeyed.

"Good night, gentlemen," said Frontivard, as he got in, still holding in his hand his terrible talisman. "You will find the body of your comrade in the weeds behind the house; and let me advise you—post more intelligent sentinels hereafter. Throw her into the high, Reverdy."

As the machine disappeared in the shadows of the wood a volley of revolver shots rang out. Two bullets struck the car, the rest went wild.

"Ha!" said Frontivard, "fortune is with us tonight!"

Bianca had fainted and Reverdy made no reply.

Once out of the wood, Frontivard said, "Slow down, Reverdy," and getting out he deposited the can of nitroglycerin carefully upon the ground. Two minutes later they came to the spot where McIvor was waiting. Reverdy lifted his wife, still unconscious, into the waiting car.

"Drive west," said Frontivard, getting in after him, "and drive fast. We will return to the city by way of Riverside."

They had gone perhaps half a mile when a tremendous explosion rent the air, and a column of flame leaped to the sky behind them.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Reverdy. "They have blown themselves up!"

"No," responded Frontivard, "I have blown them up. It is another of my jests."

Reverdy reached over and grasped his friend's hand in silence.

In next week's Ledger the third of this extraordinary series of stories will appear. There will be eight in all, each a complete adventure, but all dealing with Frontivard and Reverdy in their attempts to break up the Brothers of the Red. Before you have finished the series you will make up your mind that Frontivard is the most fearless and resourceful detective of whom you have ever read.

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An Engineer's Nerve

Or, Burt Corbin's Test—By F. Lee Allen

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CHAPTER VI.

A FIGHT AND KNOCKOUT.

THE question was in Corbin's mind. Why had Morphy taken to spying upon his friend? Were the two rivals for the girl's favor, and had Morphy concealed himself with the expectation of such a meeting? He had evidently arrived before Corbin, and was not aware that his actions were being observed by the engineer.

If Harding or the girl had glanced in Corbin's direction, they would have seen him, for he made no attempt to conceal himself. Apparently they were too much engrossed in their immediate affairs to take any notice of what was passing about them.

Harding came to where the girl stood waiting his approach, and began speaking earnestly and rapidly. Corbin could not hear what was passing between them, but noted the girl's hopeless gestures to the fireman's appeal. Suddenly she seemed to fire with a quick anger and spoke vehemently, then turned and walked away.

A look of surprise came into Harding's face; for a moment he hesitated, started after the girl, then stopped and gazed toward the ledge of rocks from which came the sharp barking of the dog, which had discovered Morphy's position.

Seeing that further concealment would be useless, and it would only be a matter of a few minutes before he was discovered, Morphy came forth from his hiding-place with an air of jauntiness, and secretly aimed a kick at the dog, which the animal returned by snapping at his heels. Both the eyes of the girl and Harding were turned upon him as he came toward them.

Having no desire to be brought into prominence by a like method—and the dog was evidently aware of his presence, for he stood upon a ledge below and barked up in his direction, after worrying Morphy's heels to his complete satisfaction—Corbin turned to descend the ledge the way which he had come. It might be possible to move away unobserved—it did not matter much whether he were seen or not. In any case he did not care to stay where he was.

He began the descent of the ledge, and had nearly reached the beach, when he heard the girl's terrified scream, and turned to see the two friends clutched in a struggling heap upon the sand.

It was Corbin's first impulse to ignore the matter. It was no affair of his, he had no friendship for either of the men, and it did not matter which should get the better of the fight, nor did what they were fighting for interest him.

It was at that moment that Morphy, with Harding pinned upon his back, raised his free hand to strike at the fireman's upturned face. It was the unfairness of the blow and a hatred of the type of man that would descend to such tactics that decided Corbin and caused him to interfere at this moment.

As Corbin came upon the run to the spot, the dog which had driven Morphy from his hiding-place was now making snapping attacks upon the silk-clad ankles of the fireman. Corbin's arm swung down, and his hand fastened in the collar of Morphy's coat, then with a heave of his shoulders, he jerked Morphy to his feet and swung him forward, and the fireman went spinning and stumbling in the soft sand, to collapse sprawling in the wash of a breaking wave.

There is a certain point of anger, that when passed, even the bully's fear deserts him and he fights blindly, with courage, a man his equal. It was so with Morphy, as he picked himself to his feet, his water-soaked suit clinging to his body. A mad torrent of oaths came from his lips, and his face contorted with the fury that surged through his brain. Whatever had been the grievance between him and Harding, it was upon Corbin now that the rage was centered, and it was with the wild fury of an animal that he darted up the sand toward where the engineer stood awaiting his approach.

Harding, dazed by the pommeling he had received from Morphy, had been assisted to his feet, and stood weakly, the girl's arm supporting him.

As Corbin saw the approaching Morphy, he cast his coat to one side, for he recognized something in the fireman's manner that warned him to be prepared. Only one look he cast in the girl's direction, and a half-smile came to his lips. He was being completely ignored, and here he was awaiting the attack of a man, made the principal in a fight in which he had interfered only for the love of fair play.

But now that he saw the fight with Morphy was inevitable, he acknowledged to himself that he would not have changed the situation if he could, and he did not wait for the fireman to begin the attack, but swung out at him as his mad rush brought him within reach.

The blow went wild, and Morphy's fist landed a crashing blow upon Corbin's cheek. Corbin was one of those men that need the angry resentment of a blow to fight their best, and once aroused never seem to know when they have been whipped. His teeth gritted now as he lunged forward at Morphy, the blood throbbing at the temples, his eyes blurred for the moment by the mad rage that whipped his blood.

There came a thud as the blow encountered the soft flesh upon Morphy's jaw, and the fireman shot back, his body crumpling inertly as he fell, to huddle sprawled upon the sand.

The outcome of the fight had been so sudden that for a moment Corbin stood, half expecting Morphy to rise and rush at him. But as the fireman made no move, and the white heat of his anger cooled, Corbin knelt down beside Morphy, a sudden fear tugging at his heart. Other men had been killed by such a blow.

The girl and Harding had been forgotten, or Corbin might have thought it strange that they did not come forward now, as he felt, then listened, for the pulsations of the fireman's heart. There was a step behind him, and he felt a hand upon his shoulder and heard a voice that in the excitement of the moment, he failed to recognize.

"Pretty sort of pickle, hey, you've got yourself into, young man? Is that fellow knocked out or dead?" The newcomer swung Corbin to his feet with a grip and a twist that made the engineer wince with pain.

"What—so—h'm! it's you, Corbin? This is a surprise." It was probable that C. H. Bennett, General Manager of the L. N. & N. was startled, his speech, expression, everything about him showed it.

Two things Corbin noted dully as he stood stupidly gazing first at Morphy, then at Bennett. Neither the girl nor Harding was in sight, and there was no brotherhood charm upon the dangling end of the fireman's watch chain.

From the embankment that led with a slight slope to the land above came the bark of a dog. For a second both men turned, and saw the dog that had accompanied the girl halfway up the slope, his tongue hanging foolishly, his tail wagging, while now and again he uttered short barks, as if he thought it was all some kind of play.

From the sand at the men's feet came a low moan and a movement from the huddled form.

"Well, you haven't got that on your conscience anyway, Corbin," said Bennett, as he glanced sharply into the face of Morphy. "Your friend's coming to." With a queer look upon his face that Corbin could not understand, he turned and strode away, before the half-formed explanation upon the engineer's lips had found utterance.

Then, as he saw Morphy's eyelids fluttering, he picked his coat from off the sand, for a moment watched the ample back of C. H. Bennett as he climbed the slope where the dog had stood a moment before, then moved away down the beach, and if the dog had been Corbin and had experienced the same feelings that at that moment were assailing him, he would have carried his tail between his legs.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW HEAD BRAKEMAN.

THE railroad man is no respecter of persons. He will discuss the actions of the president as freely as that of a section boss. The bully, the coward, or the man who is disloyal to his fellows have no place in his regard.

Corbin, by reason of his action in coming to the Northern Division and the prominence which had attached to him, during the investigation of the wreck that preceded it, had formed the topic of conversation for more than one stove-pipe committee.

The occurrence at Long Curve, Corbin's panic, all had been reported by the head brakeman, and had lost nothing in the frequent repetitions that followed. The latest proof of the engineer's cowardice had been furnished in some mysterious manner to the "committee." It was said that Corbin had whistled "brakes" for an imaginary stop signal, had jammed his air into the emergency in the panic of his nerves.

In view of all the accounts, the stovepipe committee had rendered a fairly unanimous verdict that Corbin had lost his running nerve, at any rate was a coward, and predicted that it would be but a short while before he would either go running a switcher in the yard, or give up railroading all together. Many predicted that Corbin's career would end in some big wreck, that his nerve would fail him at some crucial moment.

Although there was nothing said in Corbin's presence, the engineer felt the reserve practiced toward him, and it was no great effort to divine that his actions had been the subject for unfavorable comment. It takes antagonism to steel some men to a purpose. Without the whip of public opinion they never amount to much; with it, spurred on by wounded pride, they accomplish the seemingly impossible. Corbin knew now that he was no coward, whatever other men thought, and it was his pride and the determination to prove this to his companions that spurred him on.

After his fight with Morphy at Hermon Beach, Corbin went back to Hersley, one cheek puffed and bruised. He had seen nothing of Harding or the girl, and was not in a particularly cheerful frame of mind.

"The minute I took the fight on my own shoulders, Harding and the girl left me to get out of it the best I could," he thought. "Not even a 'thank you,' and if I know men, Morphy will do his best to get back at me. What brought Bennett to Hermon Beach, I wonder?" He fell to studying the strange manner of the General Manager. What had his words meant, his manner?

"But I've got one person's number all right," Corbin muttered, in conclusion. "There's something in this business I can't understand yet, but there's one thing of which I am certain. That is, that it was Morphy who was talking with the girl at the foot of the stairway at Hermon Beach last Sunday night. Wonder if Harding will show up tomorrow night?"

Corbin's landlady was standing in the hall when he came down to supper Monday night.

"You'll excuse me, Mr. Corbin," she

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began. "But can you tell me anything about a Mr. Onthank, a Mr. Roy Onthank. He's going to work for the Northern Division. He seemed to know you, as he asked if you were stopping here."

"Don't seem to remember him," puzzled Corbin. "What is he, a fireman?"

"He didn't say, Mr. Corbin. I asked thinking you might recommend him. He brought no trunk, and——" the landlady expressed her doubt by the shrugged shoulders.

"May know him at that," Corbin assured her. "But the name's got by me."

"He's to come in the morning, and if you will let me know——"

Corbin's assurance that he would be only too glad to do so seemed to relieve the good lady's anxiety.

Harding was late that night in reporting for work. He stopped beside Corbin, who with torch and oil-can in hand was making a final inspection of the engine before leaving the roundhouse. It was anything but a friendly greeting that Corbin extended to his fireman.

"Well, you've got around at last, have you?" he growled. The fact that Harding had shifted his battle upon another, then had crept off like the coward he was, still rankled.

"Look here Corbin," blurted the boy. "I've had you wrong. They told me you were no good. I thought you had a streak of yellow——"

"You're a nice one to talk about a streak of yellow!" snapped Corbin angrily. "What about yesterday?"

"I knew you'd think that. Honest, Corbin, I couldn't help it. It was white of you to sail in and help me out. I may be bad, but I ain't rotten. There are some things I won't stand for. Well—you've got a right to feel sore, I suppose." Harding turned and climbed to the cab.

Corbin followed a few moments after. He was frankly puzzled at Harding's attitude. Had he and Lewis Morphy split for good? What was the explanation of the fight between the two, and what was the reason that Harding had deserted the fight so unceremoniously, a reason now that he could or would not explain? There were several other matters to be settled yet, before Corbin felt like accepting Harding's friendship. He did not care to have his fireman think he had interfered in the fight, the day before, because of friendly feelings toward him. It was with some such idea that he said, as the engine was running along toward the freight yard:

"Don't get the wrong idea of this, Harding. Morphy could have pounded you to a finish if it'd been a fair fight. If you'd been doing the same as he was at the time, I'd have jumped on you——"

"Don't I know it?" returned Harding. "That's why I say you're white. Gee, old man, I wish you would be my friend! I need one bad enough."

"Morphy?" suggested Corbin.

"Money'll buy you all the friends you want—such as they are," sneered Harding, and relapsed into a sullen silence.

In spite of himself there was something about Harding that Corbin liked. As he had said, he might be bad, but he wasn't all bad. Well, just what it was Corbin couldn't exactly define, one either likes a person or he doesn't.

As the tail lights of the caboose cleared the lead to the Hersley yard, the head brakeman swung down the ladder of the first car and came, lantern in hand, over the tender into the cab. Corbin glanced around inquiringly as he heard the scrape of the brakeman's shoes on the iron.

"Hello, fellow!" greeted the head brakeman, climbing to the fireman's seat. The voice was strange, a new man.

"First trip over this pike," the man was explaining to Harding. "Came from the Southern. First thing off they mark me up for one of these car-hungry trains."

"What name are you sailing under?" asked Harding. "Corbin here, came from the Southern."

"Sure, I know him," answered the brakeman. "He was pulling varnished cars." He looked over toward Corbin in the half-light from the partly-opened fire-box door. "Don't remember me, do you, fellow? I 'broke' the clothes-line, and believe me, I got all I want of local runs."

"Seems as if I had seen you somewhere," admitted Corbin. "What did you say your name was?"

"Oh, I'm carrying right signals all right. Just got sick of my job on the Southern. My name's Onthank—Roy Onthank."

"I've heard of you up to the boarding-house today——" began Corbin.

"Sure, the landlady said you were stopping there. Told her I knew you—no harm done," hastily interrupted the brakeman.

"No," admitted Corbin. "All I was going to say was, that I never heard of your name before."

"Don't let that trouble you, fellow," said the brakeman, with a sneer upon his lips that in the dim light Corbin failed to observe.

CHAPTER VIII.

A RIVER OF FIRE.

"THE General Manager's coming up from Hersley," Billy Marvin, the conductor, commented, as he handed Corbin his train orders. "The operator said they'd ordered out an engine for his car. Gee! if they charged the old man mileage, he'd owe the railroad on pay day."

Billy Marvin started off toward the caboose not knowing that his words had caused the thoughts of three men within hearing to become actively engaged.

For more than a mile the Zawnee River ran beside the southbound track of the L. N. & N., until some half-mile above Walmouth station, near the switch to the southbound passing siding, it swept away from the tracks at right angles. It was a wide stream, and supplied the power for a number of mills upon its banks. One in particular, the West End Electric Co., ten miles north of Walmouth, was considered one of the largest of its kind in the country.

Corbin's engine strained along over the slight grade at this point where the river began its journey beside the track, the black smoke pouring from the stack, as Harding spread shovel after shovel of coal upon the greedy, licking fire, whose yellow light glared up against the dark, starless sky.

There was a space between the tracks and the river, grown thick at places with swamp growth. As he glanced from his window, Corbin could make out the dark outline of the moving waters of the Zawnee, a hundred feet or more wide at this point.

A half-mile away from the switch to the passing siding at Walmouth, the green signal light of which shone like some big sparkling green jewel against its dark setting, a man crouched down in the underbrush between the tracks and the river.

As the creak of tracks, the rumble, the dancing glare of the headlight, the heavy exhausts all proclaimed the approach of a freight train, he got to his feet, tossed the cigarette that he had been smoking away, and waited tensely, his gaze fixed first upon the headlight of the approaching train, then darting to where the green of the switch light shone.

The green of the electric block signal changed to red as Corbin's engine passed it. Suddenly his gaze fixed upon a tiny licking point of flame in the undergrowth beside the river. The next instant, his eyes staring wildly in terror, he saw the flame lick out and across the waters of the Zawnee, running upon the water in sweeping bursts of fire, until the river from shore to shore was one swirling mass of flame. Tongues of fire were darting ahead up and down the river, the flames spreading away like the waves from the bow of a fast motorboat. The bushes upon the bank were crackling and shooting sparks and black smoke upward.

It was all so unreal, so utterly out the line of what he had ever seen before, that for a moment Corbin doubted his senses. It was impossible, a fever dream, a nightmare! Water on fire? Then beside him he heard the startled exclamations of Harding and the head brakeman, felt the heat of the blaze that rolled toward the track with the wind, knew that whatever its cause it was real.

The train was gaining speed rapidly now, as each car swept over the rise and onto level track. With one hasty glance back at the long, winding, swinging cars that moved behind the engine, a glance in which Corbin saw the flames sweeping and reaching out to engulf them, he slammed his window and pulled out the throttle notch by notch.

A scream of terror, lost in the rumble of the train, rose from the bushes beside the track, and as the cars swung forward, a man rushed, half-blinded by the smoke and his terror, up the embankment, and grabbed at the handle of a passing car. The next instant he went hurtling back down the stone embankment, to lie stunned and bleeding at its foot.

It is not the rank or station that makes the hero, it's the man. They tell yet on the L. N. & N. how when the caboose went sweeping by the spot, and Lonny Shaw, the middle man, saw the body of the man beside the track, he swung from the caboose, and in the fierce heat went stumbling over and away from the tracks with the wounded man in his arms.

Corbin, with his eyes ahead, fixed on the gleaming point of green that marked the switch to the passing siding, beyond which there was safety, neither saw the flying sparks that swept against the train, nor heeded the blinding, choking clouds of smoke that poured into the cab.

Harding worked, his face dripping perspiration, his eye fixed constantly on the dancing needle of the steam indicator, while the head brakeman crawled down on the steps of the engine away from the fire, the bulk of the engine shielding him from the heat and smoke.

Once Corbin glanced down at the fireman as he wielded his scoop back and forth. Something about the boy's courage in the dangerous situation in which the train was placed touched Corbin. He reached out and placed a hand on Harding's shoulder. Whatever the boy's faults, he was no coward.

As Harding stopped when he felt the pressure of Corbin's hand and glanced up quickly, he saw the same hand out-

(Continued on page twenty-two.)

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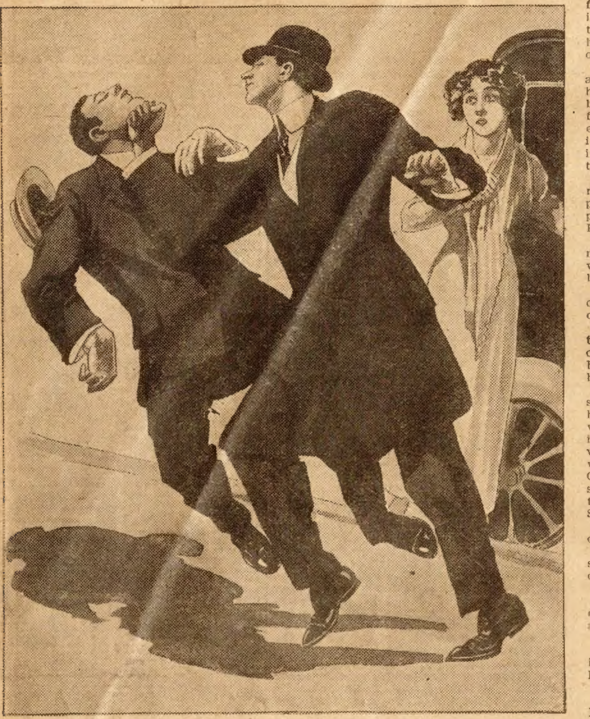
The Spider Conquest

Or, Gurlock's Wizard Work - By Will Lisenbee



A powerful right arm shot out.

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Begun in No. 11, March 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.

IT WAS true that Norman Gurlock and his daughter had arrived on the Princess with Delbert Ffrench; but the report that they had gone with him to the St. Regis Hotel was a mistake. They had proceeded—not directly—to the Gurlocks' New York mansion on Eighth avenue, which had been put in order to receive them.

It was the scientist's purpose to keep his presence in the city a secret, and when newspaper reporters called, they were told that the scientist and his daughter had gone to Boston.

The startling news that the spiders were invading the Southern States and were rapidly pushing their way northward, caused a thrill of vague fear among the people everywhere. And added to this were the reports coming from South America. In Brazil, in Ecuador, Venezuela, and other countries on the continent, the spiders were spreading terror and death, and now the United States was feeling a touch of the dire calamity and the shadow of it lay like a blight over the land. The newspapers were filled with the appalling ravages of the terrible pests, and everywhere the people talked of nothing else but the threatened calamity.

The War Department was busy trying to devise means for repelling the invading pests. Fleets of aeroplanes, carrying explosives which emitted deadly gases were sent to interrupt the vast swarms of spiders coming in clouds from the South and spreading over the Southern States. But these efforts were of little avail. Scientists everywhere were called upon to confer with the commissioners appointed by the President to devise some means for protection from the invading spiders, and it was not strange that a most strenuous effort was made to discover the whereabouts of the now noted Dr. Gurlock, who, as the reputed author of the pest that was threatening the Western Hemisphere, was just then the most talked of man in the world. But he could not be found, and as far as the public was concerned, he had vanished as completely as if he had never existed.

Delbert Ffrench, after a few days spent at the hotel, suddenly disappeared, though the Princess, in charge of Captain Moddington, remained in waiting.

But Delbert Ffrench had not left New York. He had simply taken quarters in another hotel under an assumed name, that he might escape the annoyance of being dogged by reporters.

He had few acquaintances in New York. He was something of a recluse, and did not mix with the great swarm of the idle rich young men who do nothing but seek for some new avenue of pleasure that is not so narrow as the one marked out for them by their indulgent parents. In consequence, Delbert Ffrend found no difficulty in keeping his identity a secret, and thus he escaped the annoyance of having reporters besiege him to obtain information regarding the vanished Dr. Gurlock.

In the meantime, Nathan Fielding had planned and was carrying out his most sinister designs. Having been on the defensive, and finding that it lacked something of the spice of life, and at the same time gave him much annoyance without a chance to strike back, he decided to assume a more aggressive attitude and attack his foes in their strongholds.

The threatened invasion of the Amazon spiders did not trouble him in the least. He feared no harm from their threatened visit, but rather hailed the situation as one likely to afford him ample opportunity to carry out his plans and at the same time bring about a relaxation of the vigilance of the law.

Having been troubled not a little by the detectives who had been chasing him up and down the world, he decided to turn about, and instead of fleeing from them, employ some of the same species to ward off the attacks of those opposed to his liberty, and enlist them in his own interest.

Thus it happened that Fielding, on a certain evening just at nightfall, ascended a long flight of stairs to the office of Dick Weasel, private detective. The detective's quarters were most modest and unpretentious, the dingy window overlooking the East River. His narrow face and ferretlike eyes were in keeping with his name as well as his character.

Mr. Weasel was a young man, and had not as yet achieved either fame or fortune in his chosen profession. But he was one of the great army of failures who firmly believe the world owes them a living. Mr. Weasel was fully convinced of this, and had reached a stage in his career where it seemed necessary that he should give the world a hint to fulfill its obligations to him. Failing in this, he was resolved to take the matter into his own hands and acquire what he considered his due by any means that offered.

Consequently when Fielding, exhaling an air of opulence and geniality, entered his office and laid a hundred-dollar bill before him as a retainer, he almost fell from his chair. But he concealed his emotions with a great effort, and pocketing the bill, made his distinguished visitor name what sacrifice was to be made to earn the money.

"I have heard of you as one who is most likely to be of service to me in the present case," said Fielding. "You are pretty well acquainted with New York, I take it?"

"A great deal better than it is with me, unfortunately," smiled the detective, who, with all his faults, was inclined to be modest respecting his own merits.

"You would not mind undertaking a commission that would involve you in a certain amount of danger?"

"Of course that would depend," said the detective, guardedly. He wanted a chance to taste some of the luxuries the hundred-dollar bill in his pocket would buy before imperiling his life and liberty.

"Certainly," agreed Fielding. "I shouldn't want you to blow up the city hall, or anything like that, to start with. But there may—and then there may not—be danger connected with the work I have in hand. But the first steps will be easy. You have heard of Norman Gurlock, the man who is said to be responsible for the existence of the spiders that are invading our country from the South?"

"Having read the papers, I have heard of him," replied Weasel.

"You may know that he owns a mansion on Eighth avenue which he occupies at certain times?"

"Yes."

"You have heard that Gurlock and his daughter were in New York recently, and that they had gone to Boston?"

"Yes?"

"Well, I want you to find out if this is true. In other words, I want you to locate Gurlock and his daughter."

"Very well, I'll do my best."

"The first thing to be done," went on Fielding, "is to find out if he and his daughter are not in the mansion on Eighth avenue. I believe they are there. In fact, I am quite sure of it. You must find out for me. Can you do it?"

"I shall let you know within twenty-four hours," said Weasel, with an air of confidence.

"Very well. I shall return at this time tomorrow evening."

Fielding left the detective's office, entered a taxicab, and was driven to his lodgings in an obscure corner of the East Side. Arriving there, the president of the Peruvian Rubber Company changed his garb for one of a more economical style and went to a moving picture show.

He was enjoying the freedom of life which the concealment of his identity had brought. As Joe Sykes he could go and come as he pleased, without fear or favor, while the sleuths of the law were judiciously searching for Nathan Fielding, the absconding president of the Peruvian Rubber Company.

Wealth and position do not always bring a full measure of happiness. This was so in Fielding's case. He welcomed a change, even though the change had been one of necessity. He was glad to escape for a time from the position and fame he had acquired in the field of speculation and graft. He was glad to be free. He could, he fancied, hear the clank of the chains as they fell from him.

After the show was over, he went out and got a whisky and soda, returned to his lodgings threw up the window, and sat down to smoke a cigar, while he breathed the soft May zephyrs that came from the bay.

He was in a reflective mood. He recalled, not without a certain sense of pleasure, the adventures that had befallen him during the last few days of his stay in Manaos, for associated with

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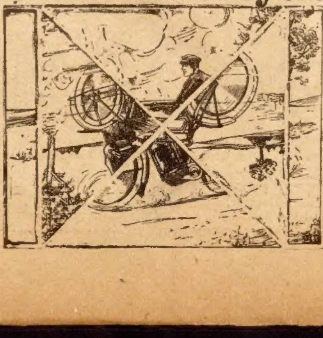

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the exciting experience was a pair of deep blue eyes and a sweet oval face. The vision haunted him, and he swore under his breath at the stroke of bad luck that had deprived him of the society of Dorothy Gurlock, that night in Manaos.

He planned a cunning ruse; to get the scientist out of the way under the pretext of conducting him to a place where he could escape the mob. He had succeeded in luring him away, but the mob from which he had planned to protect Gurlock had swept down upon him like a storm, and he had been compelled to relinquish his project and flee for his own life.

In the clash and tumult of it, he had lost the scientist, and that was not all. On his return to the mansion on San Vincente street, he discovered that the girl had disappeared. So baffled and disappointed, he was forced to leave the turbulent city and take passage in the first vessel in which he could secure a berth. And now the scene had shifted to New York. The cards had been shuffled and dealt, and he had a chance to take a hand in the game again.

What he desired was to get Dorothy Gurlock in his power again. That was the problem he was turning over in his mind as he sat by the open window and puffed energetically at his cigar. It was his purpose to play a smooth game. He was a versatile and an ingenious liar. He had, he believed, gained the confidence of Gurlock and his daughter, and he would use this as a factor in forwarding his schemes.

During Fielding's eventful career, he had been chiefly concerned with the problems of accumulation, and no sentiment had entered his soul to handicap him in his career. But now, despite his past habitual avoidance of anything that was colored with a touch of sentiment, he realized that the subtle witchery of romance had ensnared him.

He was in love; he had fallen deeply—as deeply as his selfish nature would permit—in love with Dorothy Gurlock. He would have given his fortune to win a smile from her. More than that, he was willing to brave the greatest peril for her sake. She had not been unkind to him. He had, he reflected with some satisfaction, been of service to the girl and her distinguished father at a time when they were surrounded by the most deadly danger. Surely the girl would be grateful. If he had an opportunity, he felt that he might win her regard. He was going to try, at least. He had laid his plans well, and it was his purpose, should the girl be in the city, to get her in his power.

A smile of satisfaction came over his face as he contemplated his plans. In the meantime, much depended on the shrewdness of Weasel, the detective. And Weasel, at that very moment, was in close conversation with Lem Bidwell, who had until recently been caretaker at the Gurlock mansion.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE mansion on Eight avenue belonging to Norman Gurlock was one of the old-fashioned brownstone front variety, which in the days gone by was wont to look down on its less pretentious neighbors with a certain disdain. It had come into the possession of Gurlock through a distant relative who had died a dozen years before. It was a gloomy, uninviting structure, with a history quite in keeping with its dark and forbidding aspect. Gurlock had made no attempt to modernize it, and as he rarely used it for a residence, it was left in the possession of a caretaker when not in use.

In the spacious library in an upper story of the old mansion, sat Norman Gurlock, the great biologist. Before him, on a wide table of dark mahogany, were a number of small cages made of fine wire screen. These contained a large collection of spiders and other insects. On another table near by was a larger cage of the same material containing a score of the great tawny-winged spiders—those dreaded creatures which were now causing the people of two continents the gravest apprehension.

Before him on a slab of glass lay one of the venomous winged spiders, its purple wings crumpled, its legs moving as if in the throes of death. Norman Gurlock watched it intently, and after fifteen minutes had passed and the spider still showed signs of life, he rose from his chair, placed a screen over the struggling spider, and left the room.

He passed through a wide hallway and entered a large room richly furnished in the style of the past century. As he entered, Dorothy, who was seated by a window reading a book, rose and came to meet him. Her dark blue eyes were shadowed by a look of deepest concern as she saw the shadow on her father's face.

"What success, father?" she asked.

He shook his head gloomily. "It looks as though I had failed," he said, sinking into an easy chair.

She came up and leaning on the back of his chair, stroked his whitening hair tenderly.

"I am confident that you will succeed," she declared.

"I hope so, dear."

"Your last experiment failed, did it?"

"It seems so, though I am not sure. The disease germs with which I inoculated the last specimen seemed to work for a time, but just as I was confident of victory the specimen rallied and showed signs of increasing strength. My carelessness has brought a dreadful scourge upon the world, and I must do everything in my power to rid the world of it. But even though I succeed in the accomplishment of my purpose, it will not atone for the dreadful loss of life and the human suffering this scourge has brought."

"Oh, father. It hurts me to hear you say that!" cried Dorothy. "You are not to blame for what has happened, and you have done all that human power could to rectify the mistake. I want to help you. I know I can. I have followed you through all your experiments, have tried to familiarize myself with every detail of your work, and I know you can trust me to give you intelligent help. You have not slept for twenty-four hours. You must have rest, or you will ruin everything by breaking down just at the time when you need all your strength. Come, now, and try to get some sleep, for my sake and for the sake of what you can do for humanity."

He rose and kissed her tenderly. "I will do as you advise," he said, "and you can take my place for a little while."

"Thank you, dear father," murmured Dorothy. "You must have a good rest, and I will call you whenever it becomes necessary."

Norman Gurlock went to his room and retired, while Dorothy repaired to the library to begin her vigil at the altar of scientific research—to watch the subtle workings of the mysterious, infinitesimal germs that were to decide the fate of a nation—those invisible atoms whose silent manifestations were more potent in directing the destiny of the nation than the most despotic monarch could have been.

And while the slender figure of the girl sat with head bent over the dark mahogany table in the old mansion, far away to the south, coming like a black shadow across the blue of the sky, the May sunlight glinting on innumerable purple wings, a menacing cloud of winged spiders was advancing upon the greatest nation of the Western World.

And while the invading cloud that threatened the lives of the people of the Western Hemisphere was advancing from the far-off equator, ready to give battle to Man, who has been given dominion over all the beasts of the fields and fowls of the air, an invisible swarm of microscopic life no bigger than the point of a needle was invading the citadel of the life of a writhing spider on the glass slab before the eyes of the slender girl; and on the issue of this battle waged on a field no bigger than the point of a pin, hung the destiny of a nation! Even more than that; it threatened the supremacy of Man on the earth—to wrest from him the dominion over the most humble creatures God had made and banish him from the earth.

And while this battle was being waged on its microscopic field, and while the destiny of man hung in the balance, the great city of New York, unmindful of the menacing shadow of doom, went on spinning its golden web, or wrapped itself in rosy dreams! New York, the mighty, the proud and arrogant, the shamelessly rich and criminally poor, the Babylon of the Western World, unmoved, insouciant, went on marrying and giving in marriage, feasting and drinking, starving and begging, the rich clinking their gold and laughing to drown the moans of the afflicted and the cries of the hungry poor.

CHAPTER IX.

WHILE Dorothy Gurlock sat at the table in the library, absorbed in watching the struggling spider under the screen before her, she heard a step, and turning, saw Delbert Ffrench enter. Her pale face flushed with sudden pleasure, and without saying a word she put out her hand to greet him. He came up, took the slender hand in his own, and stood leaning against the back of the chair.

"I could not keep from thinking of your being shut up here in this gloomy old prison," he said, "and so I came right up to see you. Oh, Dorothy, what a dreadful life this is for you!"

She smiled faintly. "It does not seem so to me," she said.

"Perhaps not, but for all that your very looks tell a different story."

"Do I look faded?" she asked, with a smile.

"It is not that. This constant vigil at your father's side, the stress of worry and ceaseless effort to assist him is taking the hue of health from your face."

"But my father needs me," she said simply.

"I understand, but his devotion to science blinds him to everything else. Did he realize what freedom from all this meant to you, I am quite sure he would not permit you to go on this way."

"You are right. Father's love for his work often makes him forget, and it is this that keeps me at his side. I often think that he would not eat nor sleep till nature was exhausted were I not with him to remind him of his neglect."

"What a dutiful and indulgent daughter you are," murmured Delbert, a look of admiration on his handsome face. "I do not mean to chide you for your de-

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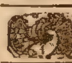

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votion to your father, but it distresses me——"

He paused and looked into her deep blue eyes as she flung her head back and looked at him.

Oh, Mr. Ffrench, why should you be distressed?" she asked.

"I could give you many reasons," he replied, "but one will suffice."

"It is because you think I am worrying myself into a decline," she smiled. "It is good of you, I know, but I don't want you to feel distressed. I am feeling quite well. But do tell me what the news is. What are the papers saying about the spiders?"

"The papers are full of all sorts of reports and opinions, but there seems no one who can speak with authority."

"Do they fear the spiders will come this far north?"

"I think they do, but all the papers seem to be afraid of causing a panic if it should appear that the pests will invade this part of the country. And for this reason, I think, many of them express no fear of danger."

"Then you think there is danger?"

"Who can say? But I am not disposed to worry. Whatever comes, we shall hardly encounter greater peril than that which beset us in Manaos."

"I shall never forget that experience,' declared Dorothy, with a little shiver.

"I hope you will never be compelled to suffer a repetition of it," murmured Ffrench.

"I think you believe there is danger in remaining in New York," she said, with a quick glance into his face.

"I shall not deny that," he confessed. "The Princess lies in waiting to carry you and your father to a place of safety. Why can you not prevail on him to come?"

'Oh, but he would never do that," Dorothy cried. "He is determined, if it is possible, to make atonement for having brought this plague upon the people, and he is resolved to remain and share all dangers with them till he has succeeded in creating some means of destroying the pests."

"But that is illogical," protested Ffrench. "To remain to share the danger with the people while he is working for their good is unfair both to himself and the people, for on his safety from danger and death may hang their sole salvation from the calamity that threatens us all."

"No doubt you are right," agreed Dorothy, "but father looks at the matter from a different point of view. It would be impossible to convince him that it was his duty to avoid endangering his life. He would look on such an act as an evidence of cowardice."

"I can well understand that, but nevertheless, by adhering to his idea he is exposing you to danger."

"And because there is danger I want to remain with him," said Dorothy

"And it is because there may be danger to yourself that I do not want you to remain," said Ffrench.

"Oh, but you would not want me to desert my father?"

"It would not be necessary if he would listen to reason." He came up and stood very close to her. His face was flooded with emotion. "I have a greater reason for wanting to protect you from danger than you know," he added.

"Oh, but my father and I know what you have done for us—what danger you have braved—how you have risked your life for us and brought us out of the very jaws of death!" murmured Dorothy. "I want you to understand that we realize all this, and that we can never express our gratitude."

Delbert Ffrench bent forward and took her hand and looked into her deep blue eyes. "It was a pleasure to do what I have done," he said. "It was more than that—it was happiness, because—I love you."

Her face flushed, and she drew back with a little gasp of surprise. "Oh, Mr. Ffrench!` what are you saying?" she breathed.

"Is it so strange that I should love you?" he asked.

"But—how could I have ever thought of such a thing?" she cried.

"You might have known it years ago—from the very first moment I saw you, a slip of a girl hanging to your father's arm that night in Cambridge! Good heavens, Dorothy—Miss Gurlock—is it possible that you have been so blind?"

"I am so sorry," she faltered, withdrawing her hand and turning her gaze toward the slender shaft of sunlight that came in through the Venetian blinds. "I—never dreamed of such a thing!"

"But why should you be sorry?" he murmured. "Is the thought that I love you so distasteful?"

She turned her head quickly and looked at him reproachfully. "You don't understand," she breathed, her face flushing:

"But you said you were sorry that I love you?" said Ffrench.

"I know I did, but I—I don't think you understand. I am proud to have you l-like me—and you have been so kind and so brave and so thoughtful—but——"

"But what?" He was leaning forward, and was looking into her eyes.

"I wish you had not told me," she faltered.

"But I have told you and it cannot be helped. You may consider it ill-timed, but I do not. I love you, and that is in itself sufficient cause for my speaking."

"But you must try to remember," said Dorothy, "that this is hardly the time to talk of such matters. We are threatened with a great calamity, and are surrounded by danger."

"That is why I have told you I love you—I want the right to be with you and protect you. I want you to marry me! I cannot endure the idea of your being subjected to other dangers such as you were compelled to go through in Manaos, and I want the right—the authority to protect you."

"Good heavens, Mr. Ffrench! What are you saying?' she gasped. "What you speak of is utterly impossible. I am amazed that you should ask it. What would father do without me? Besides, I do not want to get married."

"I will see your father and——"

"No—no!" she protested. "You must not do that"

"Then you do not love me?"

"Why, I never dreamed of such a thing!" she said. "But I don't want to offend you. Please don't mention this subject again."

"But you don't seem to understand what it means to me," insisted Ffrench. "My life's happiness depends on your answer. I must know what that answer will be. Tell me truly, are you sorry that I love you?"

"I—I am not going to tell you anything more!" she said. "Please don't ask me"

"But I insist. You must tell me."

"But I will not."

He took her hand and held it and looked into her eyes. She drew back and tried to disengage her hand, but he held it firmly

"Very well,' he said, "I shall give you time to think it over. But I am not going far away. I shall remain within easy call, and if you need me you have but to call me over the 'phone."

Her eyes fell and she permitted her hand to lie passively in his.

"You are so good," she faltered. "You will not think me ungrateful?"

"For annoying you? Poor little girl! Of course, I know that your kindness of heart would not let you be unmindful of the kindness of others—if any one had really done anything to deserve such remembrance. I have done nothing but dog your footsteps over the world. But you must not forget to call me if I can be of any service to you." There was a husky note in his voice. He bent his head swiftly and kissed her hand. Then he turned hastily and strode toward the door.

Dorothy rose and stood looking after him. His hand was on the handle of the door.

"I—I did not mean to hurt you," she faltered.

He turned and they stood facing each other in silence.

"Forgive me," she breathed. "I—I am not sorry!"

"That I love you?" he said, a swift light in his eyes.

She nodded mutely, a misty light in her eyes. He took a step toward her, but she put up her hand to stop him, and turning, fled into another room. He stood watching her till she had disappeared behind the closed door, and then he descended the stairs and passed from the house.

Dorothy, on reaching her room, flung herself upon a couch, face downward, and sobbed brokenly. And as Delbert Ffrench walked through the crowded street, a soft light shone in his dark eyes, and his heart throbbed with a new joy—a joy that thrilled his whole being.

CHAPTER X.

LEM BIDWELL was a man of some fifty years. He had the air of one who had seen better days. He also had the air of one who had a strong desire to see them again.

When Dick Weasel, the detective, called on Bidwell, that individual was seated in an easy chair in his lodgings on the East Side, smoking a cheap cigar and wondering what he could do to improve his present financial embarrassment. He was flattered by the detective's call, and pushed an easy chair to the visitor. The two men had known each other for a long period, and they felt free to talk of any project that promised a suitable reward for the energy expended.

"You were caretaker at the Gurlock mansion for quite a while, I think?" said the detective.

"Quite a while," admitted Bidwell. He would have said many whiles if it would have given him additional qualifications for a remunerative job

"And you know the lay of the house from cellar to garret, of course?" said Weasel.

"Sure thing."

"You could get in and out of the house without disturbing the present occupants if it were necessary?" asked Weasel.

"I could get in all right," nodded Bidwell, "and of course, could get out if the police did not interfere."

"Just so," nodded Weasel. "We don't need to figure on the police proposition just yet."

"I hope not. But what's in the house that you want?"

"We'll come to that by and by. Do you know who is occupying the house at this time?"

"It was occupied, I understood, by Norman Gurlock himself, a short time ago."

"Are you sure that he really did occupy the house?"

"I can't say that I am."

"You can find out?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, that is what I want you to do"

"When?'

"Immediately."

"Very well."

"What I desire to know particularly is, if Norman Gurlock and his daughter are there."

"The papers say he went to Boston," said Bidwell.

"Yes, I understand all that, but I have reasons to believe he is still in the Eighth avenue mansion."

"I shall soon find out."

"You can let me know by tomorrow evening at eight?"

"Yes."

"Very well. I shall depend on it." The detective rose to go. "You can bring your report to my office."

"Yes. But before I go further into this matter, I should like to know what there is in it for me."

Weasel laughed. "Now that will depend on what service you can give my client," he said. He drew forth a roll of bills and skinned off a twenty and handed it to Bidwell. "This is to be considered as a retainer," he added.

"Then there will be other work to do?" asked Bidwell.

"Yes. But we'll let that go for the present. Come to my office at the appointed time." And Weasel took his departure.

The next evening, promptly at the time appointed, Lem Bidwell presented himself at Weasel's office

"Well, what luck?" asked the detective

"Norman Gurlock and his daughter Dorothy are in the old mansion all right."

"That's good news. But you are positive that they are there?"

"I am."

"Were you in the house?"

"Yes."

Weasel's eyes beamed. "This may result in another job," he said. "I am expecting another visitor presently, so I shall ask you to return here within two hours."

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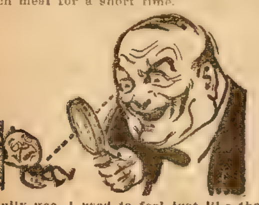

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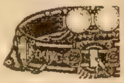

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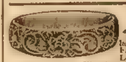

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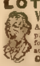

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"All right," responded Bidwell. "I'll be on hand." He left the office, and entering a cafe, proceeded to exchange a part of the twenty for a square meal.

In the meantime, Weasel sat in his office waiting the arrival of his client. At the end of a half-hour Nathan Fielding made his appearance.

"What report have you to make?" he asked.

"I can inform you that Norman Gurlock and his daughter Dorothy are at this moment in the Eighth avenue mansion," replied Weasel.

"That's fine," remarked Fielding. "But that is only the first step." He passed a cigar to Weasel and took one himself and lit it. Weasel waited for him to go on. "What I desire," said Fielding, after a moment's pause, "is to secure the services of some one who can get into the house and do a little work for me."

"I think I can put my hand on the man you want."

"Excellent!" cried Fielding. "It is a job that must be handled with judgment and discretion."

"A job that would be kept secret from the police?" queried Weasel.

"That would depend on circumstances. There are policemen who might render valuable service in a case of this kind, but it will be best to play a lone hand in this game. It is like this: What I desire is to induce Miss Gurlock to leave the mansion so that she can be interviewed by a certain person. There would be no harm in that so long as the girl went willingly."

"I see," nodded Weasel. "Go on."

"The main point is to get the message to her without her father's knowledge. Can it be done?"

"I think so. But what next?"

"The message will be—or she will suppose—from a friend of hers, and a place of meeting will be named. When she reaches that place her friend will have failed to put in appearance. There will be some ruffians who affront her, and a certain gentleman there for that purpose will repulse the ruffians and rescue her. She, very naturally, will be grateful to her rescuer, and then the rest will depend on the gentleman in the game. That part of the game would be of no interest to you, as your part will have been played."

"I see," nodded Weasel. "If I understand you aright, there is a certain amount of deception to be practiced on the young lady?"

"In a certain sense, yes. But you will not be made a party to it."

"I am not sure about that till I know what I am to do or have some one do for me."

"Your part of the game will be to get the message to the girl."

"And then, if there is a case of kidnaping or something of the sort, what then?"

"You need have no fears. Whatever happens you will be protected."

"I am not so sure about that. Nevertheless, I will understake to secure the services of a person who will do what you require and take the risk. But you will have to pay the freight."

"Oh, certainly!" Fielding drew out a hundred-dollar bill and laid it in the detective's hand. "There will be another hundred due when the work is done," he said. "Now, let us come to business."

CHAPTER XI.

AS NIGHT settled over the city, Dorothy Gurlock left her father in the library and was descending the stairs, when a servant handed her a piece of paper on which a few hasty words were scrawled. She unfolded it and read:

"I am wating in motor car at curb. Can you run down and see me for a moment. Important. Foot disabled in accident and can't come in.

"DELBERT FFRENCH."

Dorothy read the hastily scrawled lines, and ran to the window. A large touring car stood at the curb. She threw a scarf over her head, and a few moments later had slipped out of the house and was running down the walk to the gate. She could hear the muffled sound of the auto, and caught a fleeting glimpse of dark figures standing on the walk close to the car.

She sped through the gate and onto the walk. One of the men standing there turned to her and put out his hand to detain her. A fleeting glimpse of his face showed him to be of that character which respectability shuns. She uttered a little gasp and ran toward the car. But the hand of the ruffian was laid on her arm with a sudden grip.

A quick terror beset her, and as she struggled to free herself, an athletic form leaped out of the dusk, and a powerful right arm shot out. The ruffian reeled and fell, and the next instant the hand of her rescuer was on her arm and she was pushed toward the car.

"I am Mr. Ffrench's friend," said a well-modulated voice, "and I am happy to have the opportunity to protect you, Miss Gurlock."

Dazed and bewildered, Dorothy allowed herself to be pushed gently into the car, and then the man followed her, saying hurriedly:

"You and Mr. Ffrench can talk while the car is passing around the block. That will take us clear of the ruffians there, and it will save making a scene, which I am sure you desire to avoid."

Even as he spoke, the car fairly leaped forward and sped swiftly down the avenue. Dorothy, as she was pushed into the car, saw the dark outlines of a man in the seat across the car, and supposing it to be Delbert Ffrench, she did not hesitate to take a seat at his side. And now the car was speeding down the avenue, and her rescuer who had also entered the car, was seated on the other side of her.

A gleam of light fell on his face now as he turned toward her, and that brief glance enabled her to recognize him. It was Nathan Fielding!

The sight of the man's face brought back to her mind vividly the thrilling adventures she had passed through during the last few days of her stay in Brazil. She did not know of his sinister motives, and she only remembered that he had been very kind to her and her father, and had rescued them from the mob that had made an attack on them at the old mission building. So it was with a feeling of relief that she recognized her supposed rescuer as the man who had befriended her and her father in the time of danger. But still she was mystified and bewildered. Where was Delbert Ffrench? Was he in the car?

The low voice of Nathan Fielding broke the silence.

"I am happy, indeed, to meet you again, Miss Gurlock," he said, "and am gratified that in the meeting I have been able to serve you and offer you my protection, trusting that the name of Nathan Fielding has not wholly faded from your memory."

She took the extended hand in a dazed sort of way, a feeling of vague apprehension besetting her.

"I—I thank you," she murmured, "but oh, Mr. Fielding! What has happened? Where is Mr. Ffrench?"

"I shall explain in a moment," came the low voice from Fielding. "Mr. Ffrench, as you know, met with an accident while motoring this evening. He did not consider his hurts serious, and as he had some important communication to make to you, he came this way. I followed in my car. But while he was waiting for you to come after sending you the message, he fainted, and as we were alarmed lest he was more seriously hurt than he had suspected, he was taken at once to the hospital. I used a little deception when I first spoke to you lest I should cause you unnecessary alarm. Now, if you wish I shall have my chauffeur drive the car around to the hospital, where, as I hope, he will be able to make the desired communication to you. But if you prefer, I shall have you taken back to your home at once."

"I am very grateful to you," she replied, "and if you will be so kind as to take me to the hospital, I shall be glad to see Mr. Ffrench. Do you think his injuries serious?" she asked, a slight quaver in her voice.

"I do not, I am glad to say. But of course, one cannot tell. We thought it best that he be taken to the hospital at once."

While they were talking the car was speeding swiftly on its way. Dorothy listened to his words in a sort of dazed bewilderment. She was not sure that she had not made a mistake in consenting to accompany Fielding to the hospital. She knew so little of him, and while he had been heroic in his endeavors to give protection to herself and father during those terrible days in South America, there was something about the man that repelled her—a vague, inexplicable something that filled her with distrust of him.

She began to regret accompanying him, and she was seized by a sudden impulse to tell him to take her home; but at the same time the thought that Delbert Ffrench might be lying at the hospital in a dangerous condition and waiting to see her, caused her to remain silent. Thoughts of Delbert Ffrench's last visit to her home, and of his passionate declaration, brought a vivid coloring to her face and a misty light into her eyes.

(Continued on page nineteen.)

Stops Tobacco Habit in One Day

Sanitarium Publishes Free Book Showing How Tobacco Habit Can Be Banished in From One to Five Days at Home.

The Elders Sanitarium located at 696 Main St., St. Joseph, Mo., has published a free book showing the deadly effect of the tobacco habit, and how it can be banished in from one to five days at home.

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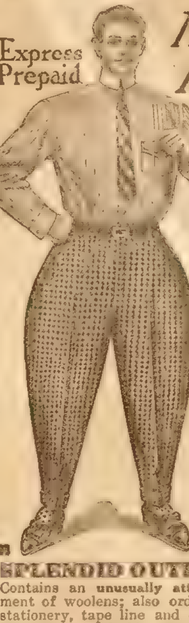

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20	8	15	21	19	1	14	4
4	15	12	12	1	18		
16	18	9	26	5	19		

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Each one of these four lines of figures spells a word. This most interesting puzzle can be solved with a little study as follows: There are twenty-six letters in the alphabet, and we have used figures in spelling the four words instead of letters. Letter A is number 1. B number 2. C number 3, etc., throughout the alphabet. IF YOU CAN SPELL OUT THESE FOUR WORDS WE WILL SEND YOU A SURPRISE PACKET CONTAINING 5 BEAUTIFUL GOLD EMBOSSED EASTER POST CARDS, ALSO A CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY in our GRAND $5,000.00 PRIZE CONTEST. All you have to do is to enclose with your answer 2 two-cent stamps to cover cost of packing, mailing, etc. USE YOUR BRAINS. Try and make out the four words. ACT QUICKLY. Write the four words on a slip of paper, mail it immediately with your name and address and 4 cents in stamps. And you will promptly receive as your reward this SURPRISE PACKET, which is a handsome assortment of five beautifully colored Gold Embossed Easter post cards, together with a copy of a New York Magazine, also a CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY in our GRAND $[illegible]000.00 PRIZE CONTEST, which closes April 20, 1914. Act promptly. This is your opportunity to enter this great contest in which we give away THREE AUTOMOBILES, PIANO, PHONOGRAPH, GOLD WATCHES, CASH PRIZES, etc. In case of a tie between two or more persons for any Prize a Prize identical in character and value will be given each person so tied. TRY AND WIN. Address

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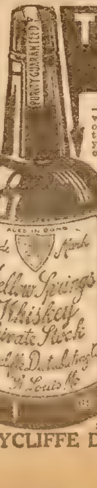
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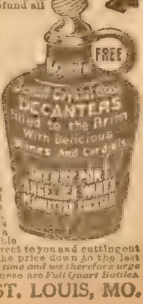
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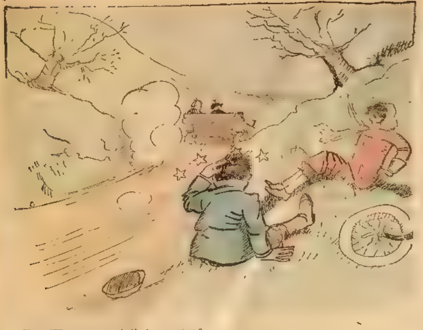


She—"Have you got their number?
He (seeing stars)—"Thousands and thousands!"

Wasn't That Slick?

The usual crowd of small boys was gathered about the entrance of a circus tent in a small town one day, pushing each other and trying to get a glimpse of the interior. A man standing near watched them for a few minutes, then walking up to the ticket-taker he said, with an air of authority

"Let all these boys in, and count them as they pass."

The gateman did as requested, and when the last one had gone he turned and said: "Twenty-eight, sir"

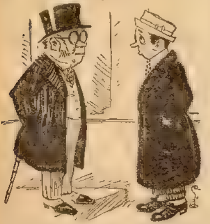
"Good," said the man, smiling as he walked away, "I thought I guessed right."

He Was Run Down.

The big red touring car struck a pedestrian, rolling him in the mud and maltreating him in general. The owner ran back, greatly excited, after stopping his car.

"Is he dead?" he asked anxiously, of the medical man who was attending the victim.

"Oh, no!" replied the doctor cheerfully, "He's not dead; he's merely run down."



Professor—"When your father attended this college he stood far higher than the other scholars.'

Young Man—"But, you see, I'm not as tall as father was."

THEIR COMPROMISE.

"Polly, put the kettle on,
We'll all take tea'"
Bill of fare we'll settle on
If we can agree
Father wants his ham and eggs,
Mother wants plain toast,
For a steak my brother begs,
But I want cold roast

Coffee is the beverage
My pursuit demands—
Gives a man a leverage
For his brain and hands.
Chocolate is father's drink,
Milk will do for brother
These put mother on the blink—
Tea's the thing for mother

Then what of the cereal?
Then what of the fruit?
What? There's no material
For food or dispute?
Mother is her mettle on—
With her all agree
"Polly, put the kettle on,
We'll all take tea'"

Unnecessary.

"Well, my good fellow," said a victorious general to a brave son of Erin after a battle, "and what did you do to help us gain this victory"

"Do!" replied Mike. "May it please your honor, I walked up boldly to one of the enemy and cut off his feet."

"Cut off his feet! Why did you not cut off his head?" said the general.

"Ah! and faith, that was already off," replied Mike.

His Hope.

An old "befo' de wah" darky was called upon to make a few remarks over the grave of a friend He removed his hat and stepped reverently and sadly toward the open grave and in solemn funeral tones said:

"Friday Vizer, you is gone We hope you is gone whar we 'spects you ain't."

Their Longevity.

Vacationist—"Is this is a healthy place?"

Farmer—"Healthy! Bless your soul, sir, it's so healthy it looks as if a lot of folks here'll have to be shot on jedgment day"

Things Have Changed.

"So that dance lasted till 2 o'clock, did it?" grumbled the old man, as the sweet young thing came down to breakfast, a little late, but looking fresh as a daisy 'And I suppose you danced every dance? Yes And you're one of these delicate girls. If I'd ask you to walk downtown some day you'd faint. And yet they say that one evening's dancing is equivalent to walking ten miles'

"Not nowadays, papa," answered the sweet young thing. "That's the old style dancing you're thinking of. The new style is equivalent to climbing about a hundred telegraph poles."

Not So Wonderful.

The Woman—"Here's a wonderful thing. I've just been reading of a man who reached 40 without learning how to read or write. He met a woman, and for her sake he made a scholar of himself in two years."

The Man—"That's nothing! I know a man who was a profound scholar at 40 Then he met a woman, and for her sake he made a fool of himself in two days!"

A State of Indignation.

"So you sold that mule for eight dollars?"

"Yes,' replied Erastus Pinkley. "He kept a-beatin' me down an' a-beatin' me down, till finally I jest sold him de mule at his own price. I didn' want to miss de chance of de mule's turnin' loose an' kickin' dat man's stingy head clean off 'im."

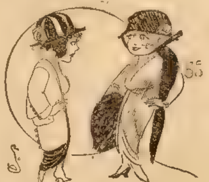
Business Blocked.

"Thought you were going away today."

"Couldn't buy a ticket."

"Nonsense. The ticket office is never closed."

"No; but there was a girl at the window ahead of me."



Mrs Albee—"Can you tell me where the Raners got their noble lineage"

Mrs. Wisteria—"Land sakes, no; but I think she makes all her own things"

The Other Way.

Mrs. Touchley—"I hated to do it, but I had to take money out of my husband's pocket while he was asleep last night to pay for his birthday present

Mrs. Chargely—"Mercy! I wouldn't dare do such a thing I used the market money and then had things charged to him

Not Tested.

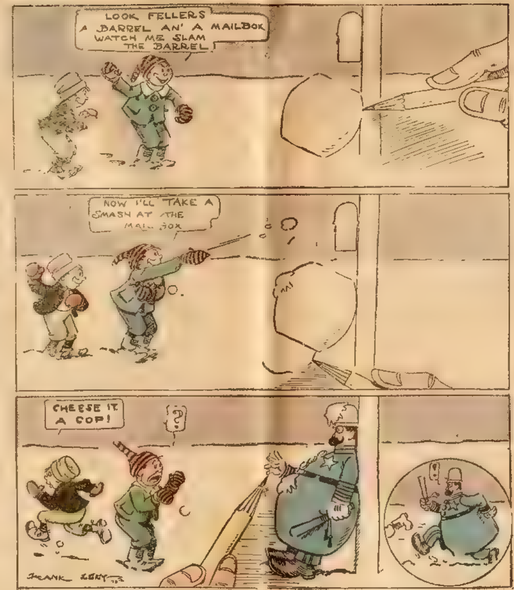
"Our product is thoroughly tested before leaving the factory. No man can sell stuff today that has not been tested"

"We manage to sell our product without testing it."

"That's odd What do you sell?"

"Dynamite."

ARTIST FOOLINGS



LOOK FELLERS A BARREL AN' A MAILBOX WATCH ME SLAM THE BARREL
NOW I'LL TAKE A SMASH AT THE MAIL BOX
CHEESE IT A COP!
?
FRANK LEKY

Her Mistake.

"I tell you I won't have this room," protested the old lady to the boy in buttons who was conducting her. "I ain't goin' to pay my money for a pigsty with a measly little foldin' bed in it. If you think that just because I'm from the country——"

Profoundly disgusted, the boy cut her short. "Get in, mum, get in," he ordered. "This ain't yer room. This is the elevator."

BILL SQUIBBS.

A funny lad was William Squibbs;
He'd carve his legs with joy
He'd laugh when he would break his ribs—
He was a butcher boy.

Paw Knows Everything.

Willie—"Paw, please tell me what is a trial marriage?"

Paw—"All of them, my son"

Dependable.

"To look at old Mr Grabson you wouldn't think he had a friend in the world."

"That's true, and yet he has a million of them."

"Where?"

"In one of the local banks."

Paw Knows.

Willie—"Paw, is Cupid blind?"

Paw—"I don't know, my son. But I do know that he is bughouse."

Maw—"Willie, you get right to bed this minute."

What Pa Does.

"What does your mother do when things go wrong?"

"She just takes it out on pa."

"And what does your sister do?"

"She hops onto pa and ma both"

"And what does your father do?"

"It's different with pa. He don't dare say much to ma and sis, and so when he gets mad he just takes it out on the street railway company and the beef trust"

Why Not Mortgage Something?

"I need a new tire for my auto"

"Well, can't you raise the wind?"

"Oh, yes; but what I can't raise is the price of the rubber and stuff that contains it."

At the Door.

"What's that noise at the door? Opportunity knocking?"

"Naw: It's the wolf"

Mary's Sentence.

The teacher was giving a lesson in mathematics and English combined

"A fathom," she said, "is a nautical word used in defining distances. It means six feet. Now, I want some little girl to give me a sentence using the word fathom.'

Instantly a hand shot up in the rear of the room

"Well, Mary, you may give your sentence."

Mary stood up proudly.

"The reason flies can walk on the ceiling," said he, "is because they have a fathom.'

A Bright Witness.

"The train struck the man, did it not?" asked the lawyer of the engineer at the trial

"It did, sir," said the engineer.

"Was the man on the track, sir?" thundered the lawyer

"On the track?" asked the engineer "Of course he was. No engineer worthy of his job would run his train into the woods after a man, sir."

Compensating Condition.

A woman visited a friend whose husband thought of moving out into the country

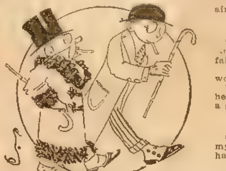
"Getting back to the land is all well and good," she said, "but could you be contented to live in a little place?'

"Yes," replied her friend. "I think I could if I were the only one there who owned an auto."

Their Money's Worth.

"I wonder why the collection is always taken up at our church before the sermon?" said little Bertie Green.

"Why, don't you know?" asked little Sammy Black, with a slight assumption of superiority. "That's so the preacher can tell how good a sermon to preach"



DeLancey—"Are you advancing any in her affections'

Reginald—"Oh, yes! Last night she said I was nothing to her whatever; the night before she said I was less than nothing!'

Unfamiliar Item.

Hiram Haycock—"This bill is more'n I expected.

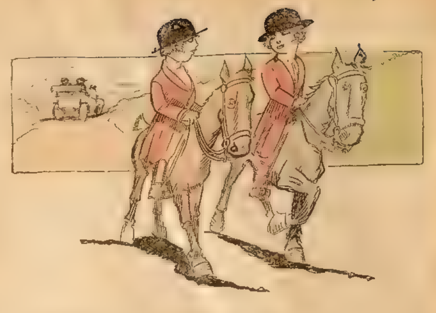
The Waiter—"You will find the items all marked Ham and eggs, beans, potatoes, coffee et cetera."

Hiram Haycock—"There, I knew you was tryin' t' hornswoggle me. Who et any cetera?

Usual Practice.

"I'm going to sell kisses at the charity bazaar Do you think one dollar a kiss is too high?

"Oh, no, people expect to be robbed at these charity affairs."



Eileen—"Charley has money enough to get married
Marion—"But has he money enough to stay so?

Refused to Stretch It.

The assessor was doing the best he could, but the farmer was shrewd and wary

"How many acres of farming land have you?" he inquired wearily

"'Bout twenty, I guess," said Reuben

"Twenty! Why, it looks to me like nearer 120. Come, now, can't you increase that a little? There are surely more than twenty acres in that tract. Suppose you stretch that a little."

"Say feller," said the farmer, "this ain't no rubber plantation."

Not Much Doing.

"I would like to lead a tranquil existence," said the troubled man of affairs

"About how tranquil? asked his hard-worked secretary.

The other thought a moment. "Oh," he answered, "about as tranquil a life as a germ leads on a $1,000 bill."

No Cause to Worry.

Old Bullion—"It galls me to think that my money goes into your spendthrift hands when I die"

Young Bullion—"Never mind, dad; it won't stay there long'

No Fancy Names.

"Do you think we have returned to the traditions of democratic simplicity?"

"Not a doubt of it. It's the first winter in years I have heard of a prominent man having a plain old-fashioned cold."

THE POROUS PLASTER.

He's one real friend, you'll find he's true
When you are in a fix,
And, while he may go back on you,
You'll find he always sticks

A Lover of Peace.

Briggs—"You must have a lot of trouble keeping your wife dressed up in the height of style."

Griggs—"Yes, but it's nothing to the trouble I'd have if I didn't"

Other Side of Shield.

Wife (complainingly)—"The Wilfinsons' house is much larger than ours.'

Husband—"Yes, my dear, and so is their mortgage.'

In the Past Tense.

A litle boy 7 years of age was valiantly consuming one of the large, modern five-cent sticks of peppermint candy some time before breakfast, and a neighbor who was gathering flowers in the early morning said

"Well, Charles, is that you? I thought you were sick with an acute bilious attack and had to have the doctor'

"Yes'm," said the boy, "I was, but that was yesterday."

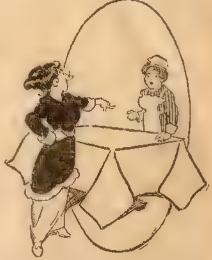
Best He Could Do.

Student—"There must be some mistake in my examination marking I don't think I deserve an absolute zero"

Inspector—"Neither do I, but it is the lowest mark I am allowed to give.'

A Reprimand.

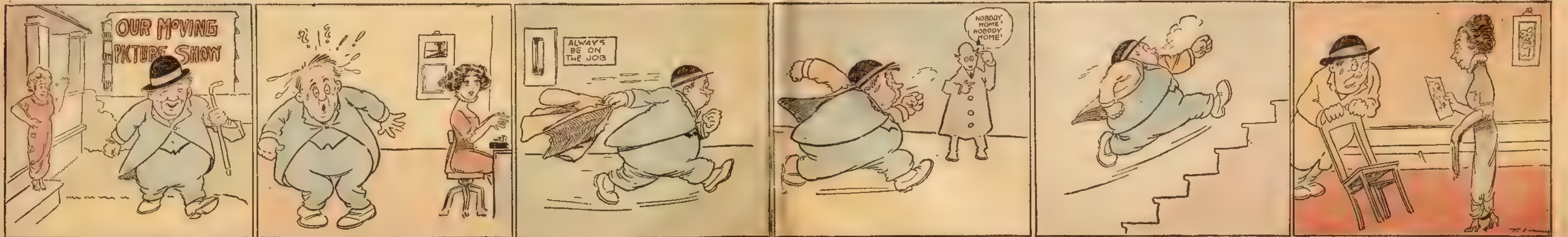
"Mamma, mamma! You've sat on my dollie. What are you thinking about? I don't sit on your children'



The Mistress—"Here's a hole in my new tablecloth."

The Maid—"Yes'm, I've seen it. I'm goin' to turn the table cloth over so the hole will be on the under side."

HIS WILD HOME RUN



Mr. Snooks—"Well, good-by dearie; I may be late for dinner tonight——

(Arriving at his office) "Jumping Jerusalem! I left in my other coat the photograph this new stenographer gave me!——

"Wife will sure raise the devil if she finds the picture of that girl!——

"Lord, I must have lost my memory and now I'm losing my wind!——

"Gee, but I wish I had wings! If she finds that picture my name will be mud!"

Mrs. Snooks—"Why, Daniel, what are you puffing so about? I found that photograph of your niece you told me about. Isn't she a pretty girl, though? You must bring her up to dinner."

The Biting Sword

Or, For Mademoiselle's Sake By Victor Ardmore

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CHAPTER XIII.
TO ARREST ME.

WHEN I returned to my companions, Mademoiselle and Sir John were sitting in conversation. As soon as they saw me they rose, and as it was evident they wished to speak with me I joined them.

"Sir," said the baronet, with a trifle more of civility than usual, "it seems fit that we should explain matters somewhat to you, since you must have overheard a part that we said a few minutes ago——"

"Though purely by accident," interrupted the lady kindly.

"Granted!" Sir John said grudgingly. "That being so I will now enlarge upon the subject. This lady is named Madeline Vallencourt, and the hand of destiny has made her a wealthy and titled woman within the year. By the death of her kinsman, Lord Derrenleigh of Collamore Castle, she becomes next of kin. His death was by a skirmish in the war on the Scottish border, and his two sons perished at the same time. No male heir was left to bear the title, and none, male or female, to dispute with her the succession to Collamore Castle and its treasures of art and money; the last estimated at a million pounds sterling."

He paused and gazed hard at me. His was a frosty eye then, but back of it was something more I could not interpret clearly.

"Collamore Castle," he pursued, "is one of the finest estates in England, and the social position of its owner gives entrance to the company of kings and princes, for no blood in the kingdom is better than that of the family. Common people are barred from Collamore acquaintance."

His eye was as frosty as ever, while the other something before noted had increased perceptibly. Had he not added his closing sentence I should have failed to guess the riddle, but he had made it clear, as well as why he was so bitter an enemy. Having observed the lady's civility to me he had taken the strange notion that I might aspire to her affections.

I shifted my regard from the baronet to our companion, and found the old, agreeable smile as conspicuous as ever. This meant much, for I had never known any one else who could so blend high intelligence, amiability, and gracious reserve into a delightful whole.

"Nay, Sir John," she interrupted, "say nothing ill to common people. I have ever found faithful friends among them, and when I reach my inheritance I shall see to it that the humblest servant there, if faithful, is my associate and friend."

I bowed low to her.

"Lady Madeline," I said, with sincerity, "I congratulate you most heartily on your fortunes. Being a Colonial, the name of Collamore Castle has not the same sound to me it would have if I dwelt near its walls. Accept my congratulations, madam, and may your life at the new estate be as long and happy as it certainly will be creditable."

"Master Stelland, I thank you greatly," she replied kindly.

Sir John came into the conversation again hastily, evidently fearing to permit us exchange of words.

"In conclusion, Lady Madeline leaves New Haven for England, a fortnight hence, under my protection. Monsieur Francois Rombouts engaged to send her from New York under escort, since I erroneously believed business would keep me in New Haven until too late for me to guard her thither. At that time we did not know she would be under any danger on the road."

He paused, meditated, and slowly added:

"Although I do not know this Captain Blair who is harassing her, I think I can account for him. Next in the Collamore succession after Lady Madeline is a woman who would not adorn the Castle either socially or in honor. It is a natural surmise that Blair represents this woman, and seeks to prevent Lady Madeline from reaching New Haven. Just how far his malignant designs extend I can only guess."

"Sir," I answered, "Lady Madeline will go safely to her destination, and after that to Collamore Castle to reign there for life."

She rose impulsively, moved forward, and gave me her hand.

"Master Stelland," she exclaimed, "Monsieur Rombouts made no error when he selected you for my escort. Your efforts have been brave and shrewd, and I feel perfectly safe with such a guide. Again, sir, I thank you for your good wishes."

"Believe me, madam, Collamore Castle shall not be cheated of its mistress," I said firmly.

Sir John had scowled blackly when he saw her hand extended to me, and I suspected that he feared his resort to frankness had miscarried of purpose, but he ventured no retort, and Hugh's announcement that our food was ready ended our talk. We ate and then started on our journey with darkness nearly two hours away.

I was not in the same composed mood that had marked our other essays at reaching New Haven, but more of stubborn determination was with me. Knowing what I did, I sharpened the glance of my eyes, and my hand scarcely ever left the hilt of my sword. If there was further fighting on the way, I intended to protect my fair charge with more of bitter zeal than ever before, and never again would I spare Captain Blair if he made an attack and was at my mercy.

It befell that we saw no enemy, and traveled wholly in peace. In the last half of the night we rested for three hours, and dawn found us fairly fresh and still advancing.

We were now so near to New Haven that I finally paused to explain, and to ask whether we should make our final push ahead by day. To me it seemed absurd that we should camp until another night, when a few hours would take us to our journey's end. I did not express myself so strongly to the others, but we were unanimous in deciding to go on.

Soon after sunrise we halted for our final meal in the woods, and Anne and Hugh soon had the fire prepared. We had finished and were considering a new start, when a man appeared near by, and, seeing us, came to our presence.

Although doubtful that he would recognize me, I knew him to be the sheriff of the county in which New Haven was situated, and it was no great surprise to see Sir John leap up, go forward, and greet him heartily. Clearly, they were acquainted, and we waited for due introductions.

Instead of this happening at once, the baronet drew the officer aside, and they talked for some minutes. Watching them, I noticed that Derley, the sheriff, often glanced my way, and I suspected that Sir John was doing me no good.

When they came nearer there was no introduction, but Derley accosted me direct. His manner was serious and somewhat worried, but he preserved the dignity of his position.

"I think," he said, half as if ashamed, "that you are Basil Stelland?"

I sent a glance to Sir John. "You have been correctly informed," I answered briefly.

"Then I regret to say that I must place you under arrest."

"Why?" I asked curtly.

"Because you have—because I am told you have—ah!—wrongfully taken valuable jewels from their owner."

He stammered pitifully, and I felt that he was a well-meaning man at heart, but I had to meet him as he presented himself.

"Did you know of this alleged fact until Sir John told you?" I asked plainly.

"No," he responded quickly. "Nothing."

"I am glad to now to whom to credit this slander. Before you decide definitely on your course, I will ask you to hear the other members of my party, the only ones who really have knowledge of the circumstances. Sir John has no knowledge, for he did not meet us until we were halfway to our destination."

"Let me speak!" Lady Madeline exclaimed. "It is absurd, ay, and greatly unjust to accuse Master Stelland! The jewels were packed by some unknown person in our package, but Master Stelland never saw the package until it was roped and on the back of the pack-horse. He can have had nothing to do with it."

Her warm defense was echoed by Hugh and Anne, and I looked at the sheriff in composed silence.

"There is no one to suspect but this person!" declared the baronet. "All our other members are absolved by known faithfulness. He—this man—is known as the Biting Sword because of his arrogant, bravo-like habits, and I doubt but justice demands him for many other crimes—"

"For shame, Sir John Rodcliff!" cried Lady Madeline, with spirit. "Master Stelland is the trusted esquire of Monsieur Francois Rombouts, and that is proof of his honesty and exalted character. It were a gross outrage to put this slight upon him, and he who does it will have to answer to Monsieur Rombouts. Be warned in time!"

"I have heard it said that the Biting Sword is a wild and reckless fellow," muttered the sheriff, clutching at his cravat in mental worry.

"Then, sir, you have listened to his [illegible]!" she declared. "Pray tell me if Monsieur Rombouts would have a wild and reckless fellow as his right-hand man?"

Derley turned several different colors and looked helplessly at the baronet. Again it was manifest that he was an honorable man, and it could not be denied that his position was painful. To refuse Sir John was to make a bad enemy. I called attention by a gesture.

"We will end useless talk now," I said, as calm as usual. "Master Sheriff, my compliments to you, but there are two reasons why I will not submit to arrest. First, as you are a Connecticut officer you cannot legally arrest me for a crime alleged to have been committed in New York without proper papers from that Colony. Secondly, I have been engaged to escort this lady to New Haven, and no man shall interfere with me while I am doing it. She goes to your town under my guidance. When we are there I am at the service of your magistrates, who will know the law. Until then no one shall arrest me!"

Sir John took on new colors that were ill becoming to him, and as he moved forward to press his point further his eyes blazed with hostility.

CHAPTER XIV.
OVERTAKEN.

THE baronet did not have opportunity to say what was in his mind. Lady Madeline held out a hand with a gesture certainly imperious enough to distinguish her when once she was within the walls of Collamore Castle, and her tuneful voice rang quite as imperiously.

"There has been enough—more, too much of talk already. Master Stelland has promised to place himself at the will of justice when we reach New Haven, and that is sufficient for an innocent man to undergo. I am on my way to your town, sheriff, and as Sir John Rodcliff has been urging that I adopt a manner of command such as befits my lofty station in life—this expression is his, not mine—I will adopt it now. Master Stelland is my guide and protector, and I will not have him interfered with here. To [illegible], not another word!"

Ay, she did say it, and never before had I suspected that she could carry the lash in her words so keenly. Where, back of her gentle nature, so much of imperative, haughty command lay I never knew, but it had come to the front like a lightning flash from a sunny sky.

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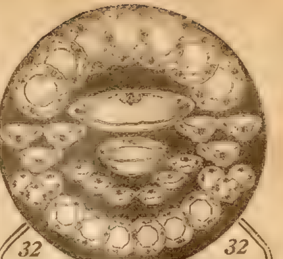

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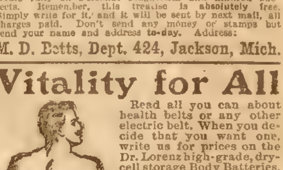

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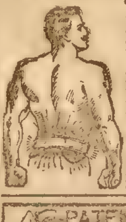

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and it carried the day. Sir John was silenced and Sheriff Derley was crushed. Neither answered. I bowed to her in silence, and she gave me a smile.

"Master Stelland," she added, all womanly now, "methinks it is time we started anew for our journey's end. May I ask you to get us to saddle?"

That was why, a few minutes later, we started, Derley keeping us company. The baronet rode by Lady Madeline's side, and he was trying to regain his lost ground, but I never looked back as I rode at the front. I trust I went without relaxed alertness, but my content was gone for the time. Events had sped the barb to my mind and, while impassive to an observer's eye, I writhed under its touch.

I had lived in a wild day and in the midst of Colonial intrigue and warfare, but never had I been under arrest or threatened with it. In serving my honorable patron, Monsieur Rombouts, I had often been compelled to use the iron hand, and had thus made foes who gave me words and backbiting epithets as ill as they were undeserved, but for the first time arrest was coupled with my name, and my pride was sorely hurt. Truly, I did not enjoy myself as we rode.

I doubt not I was going with a very gloomy face when Lady Madeline suddenly hastened her steed's movements and came abreast of me. I turned my head and caught the gaze of her beautiful eyes, as well as the sunshine of her smile.

"Pray, Master Stelland," she said sweetly, "will you have the patience to look at the bit of my horse and see if it is right? I am not certain but the good animal is slightly irritated by its touch, and I would not have him suffer."

I made suitable answer and looked not only at the bit but at the mouth of the horse, but neither seemed wrong. There had been no chafing, so I reported as much.

"Thank you, sir," she said in acknowledgment. "I have learned to regard the steed for what he is, a helper faithful to me, and I would not have my loyal friends suffer."

Something in her speech carried weight to my mind, and I looked at her more attentively. Seeing, it came to me that she had felt no doubts as to her horse, and that her last remark had a double meaning. Her words were not for a dumb servitor, but for me. It was to lighten my mental burden she had come to my side.

Again I tried to say the fitting thing, and when we resumed our way I caught a kindlier gleam in the day's sunshine, a brighter color of the trees that still held their leaves, a fairer look over all the earth. And the idea of arrest troubled me far less. I doubt not that the gloom was largely gone from my face.

We were now near New Haven and hard by the main road, so I determined to avoid a rough wood at the front and betake us to the easy way of traveling. Turning, accordingly, we presently reached good footing and continued with the houses of the town not far ahead.

That we had, however, placed ourselves in the course of other persons was soon made clear by the pounding of hoofs behind us. A fountain by the wayside furnished an excuse, and we halted to give the animals a drink and let the unknown goers pass.

Clearer came the pounding hoofs, and erelong three riders spurred past the curving fringe of bushes and came quickly down upon us. At first sight I made a discovery, for one of their number was my patron, Monsieur Rombouts.

Here was an unexpected, remarkable turn in affairs, and I enjoyed the more delayed recognition of my companions. Perhaps I held my head higher in that moment than was necessary, but I knew in part what was coming. There was no question as to how my patron would greet me.

Getting into our immediate company the exalted gentleman first waved his hand to me and then faced the others. He removed his hat to Lady Madeline, and, bowing almost to his horse's neck, spoke to her with the easy grace peculiar to him. Next he grasped Sir John's hand, but when he had done his duty there he wheeled upon me and burst into a gay laugh. Good will was in every look and motion, and I smiled back at him.

"Master Stelland," he cried, "here is a pretty mix-up, and who do you think caused it?"

"I know not, monsieur," I answered truthfully.

"The servant maid in your own house. I had learned from Sir John Rodcliff that Lady Madeline's enemies were likely to molest her if she were at once taken this way, so I penned a note countermanding my direction to you that you guide her from New York.

"Then I went northward on other business, but was detained a far shorter time than was expected. Returning home I found a distressed maid waiting to see me. She had unintentionally cleaned off your table too well, taking my letter away before you had seen it. Finding it, herself, later, she was in great worry, so she tried to see me.

"Now, Basil, had you received that letter you would not have gone to Mynheer Winckle's, and not have started the lady this way until you heard from me again. Even so, for the letter bade you delay wholly. Well, well, danger means nothing to you, for you have taken Lady Madeline through without regard to it."

Nodding jovially at me he turned to the baronet.

"Sir John, I think you never met Master Stelland when at my house. You have seen him now, and must have discovered what an invaluable man he is. Ay, for he is my other self in delicate affairs of military and diplomatic importance. For years he has been to me what prime minister is to a king. If I hear of schemes of the Dutch, I send Basil to investigate with his customary shrewdness. If I want to do serious business with a high state official and cannot go in person, I dispatch Basil, knowing he will act as skillfully as myself. If there are rogues to punish, it is to Basil I give the doing of it. Those same rogues like him not and call him an adventurer, but the scandalous term applies as well to me. No adventurer he, but my other self, or, rather my general and my prime minister."

Wholly unconscious that there had been trouble among us, my noble patron was going on in his gay but sincere manner, and for once I was not disposed to shut off praise of myself. Keeping a composed face I eyed two other persons there closely.

Lady Madeline was standing with parted lips and eloquent eyes as she drank in the description of my modest accomplishments, and she was so off her guard that her delight showed, but Sir John was torn by chagrin and venom When Monsieur Rombouts paused the baronet had his word.

"But the jewels?" he demanded obscurely.

"Ah! the jewels!" repeated my patron. "I was forgetting them. Are they along in your possession? Good! I am glad to hear it. I fancy you are mystified by possessing the trinkets. There is a certain Captain Blair who is a foe of Lady Madeline, he being an agent of one who would be heir to Collamore Castle but for her, and he is also a rascal in general. He introduced one of his tools into Winckle's house to steal what he could and get what he took to the Captain. Your departure from Winckle's offered the chance and the jewels were, it is believed, placed in a pack and shipped away by you, the idea being that they would soon fall into Blair's hands."

Sir John drew back a pace. His last card was lost.

Monsieur Rombouts slapped me jovially on the back.

"This has been an odd case, and that it was so was due wholly to Mynheer Winckle. When I gave you my first orders, I told you that the final directions would be from Winckle, since the lady was in his family. After sending you the letter you never received, I planned to call at Winckle's as I rode past and tell him the trip was abandoned, but I had gentlemen with me and forgot it

"Thus, you and Winckle both acted in good faith, but he with some eccentricity. Now, had I personally started Lady Madeline under circumstances of peril, I should have sent an escort of a dozen stout men, and made the journey one by day.

"Let me be just to good Winckle. I remember I did remark to him that we would get her to New Haven in time, even if we had to send her at night. He took this trivial remark seriously, and having all to arrange alone, and knowing Blair was around, he saw fit to insist upon travel only by night. I hope the good man has not injured anybody's health?"

He paused and my fair charge laughed melodiously.

"No one is injured, monsieur, but I do not understand why you are here."

"My business at the North was, as I have explained, completed sooner than I expected. When I returned and learned that our charming lady had departed for Connecticut, I was alarmed lest Captain Blair do some mischief, so I started this way in haste. As you see, I am here."

At this juncture there was a commotion among such of our servants as were in the road itself, and we understood that new excitement was afoot.

CHAPTER XV.

MY PLANS MISCARRY.

THE men of our party laid hand on sword and started forward to where we could see the disputants, but the trouble did not impress any one as really serious, and then, for the first time, words floated to us clearly.

"We will not be stopped! We want to see Roger Collamore!"

There seemed to be a slight scuffle, after which two persons came into view. They were Peter and Betsey Dart, our kind hosts of the house in the woods. They had then been calm, but now they were excited. They swept a quick glance around, and, advancing swiftly, simultaneously flung themselves on their knees at my feet.

"Welcome, Roger Collamore!" Peter repeated, "Hail, Lord Derrenleigh!"

They were fumbling to seize my hands and kiss them, and I was too confused to draw back. I did, however, succeed in commanding my voice.

"Nay, good people!" I expostulated "You labor under some strange attack. My name is Basil Stelland."

"My lord, it is useless to demur or deny," Betsey declared. "When you first came to our forest home we saw the Collamore look in your face, but were unable to credit what we beheld. When you were gone I found something on the floor that settled it for me. It was a small picture, made to wear suspended from a neck-chain, and it was plainly cut away from within your coat by the sword of Captain Blair when he gashed your clothes on the breast. Sir, my lord, can you deny when I add that the picture is that of your mother, the lamented Rosamond Collamore? Who but her son would carry it over his heart? Ay, and who else would have the Collamore face as you have it?"

I had turned my gaze upon Lady Madeline, and it has been said that I was the picture of dismay and sorrow. But Peter Dart took up the burden of speech where Betsey dropped it.

"You do not remember us as we do you, for you were a boy when you left England, but we were servitors on your father's estate until he and his good lady died twelve years agone. Of late there has been much scurrying to find the next of kin to the Lord Derrenleigh who died on the Scottish border, and search was unavailingly made for you, Roger Collamore, for to you would pass estates and titles if you lived. None could find you, but certain persons thought we might know, and harassed us so sorely that, three months ago, we came to this Colony to be free from persecution."

"Under assumed names," added Betsey. "Our true names are Peter and Betsey Wood."

I remembered them then, and realized that denial would avail me nothing, but it remained for Monsieur Rombouts to add the last straw.

"The tale must be a verity," he declared. "Yesterday there came to me from England a letter as to the lost young Lord Derrenleigh, together with mention of this picture the good woman speaks of, and, more important, a likeness of Roger Collamore as he was at the age of seventeen. Time has not changed you so much as you would have it, perhaps, for eleven years are short, and, with the new light, I recognize you, Master Stelland, as the lost heir, now Lord Derrenleigh. Let me be the next to congratulate you——"

"If a lady may presume upon your gallantry," cried a silvery voice, "not so. 'Tis meet that the next should be my lord's kinswoman, and she begs precedence over all."

It was Lady Madeline who spoke, and

(Continued on page nineteen.)

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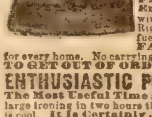

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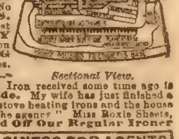

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Beware of a girl who is a peach; peaches have hearts of stone.

Blessed is the man who doesn't expect too much from his friends.

It is easier for a country minister to earn his salary than it is to get it.

There are things that money won't buy—because nobody will have them.

The Biting Sword

(Continued from page seventeen.)

she was beside me with her charming face aglow, would have knelt at my feet, but I checked and prevented what would have been nearly sacrilege in my sight.

"No, no, no!" I stammered, in great confusion.

It was even so. I, who had faced the wild beasts and deadlier men of the new Colony for ten years and smiled when a sword or knife threatened to obey its master's will and tear my life away—I was a victim of trepidation and half dumb besides. What was said to me I do not know in full, save that the lady and my good friend and patron were pressing warn and kind words upon me in a shower.

Presently Lady Madeline had a new thought.

"When," she asked, "did you first know that, through the death of the late Lord Derrenleigh and his two sons, you had succeeded to the title?"

My mind cleared, but, though I looked at her fixedly, I was silent.

"Let me surmise," she continued. "Was it not when Sir John and I told you in our camp of my fortunes?"

"Madam," I answered, "since you bid me speak, it was then. Until that moment I supposed there were three lives between me and the title."

"But when we told you what we did you knew it was you, not I, who had legally inherited the estates."

"Yes."

"Then why did you not speak and tell us who you were?"

"Madam," said I, standing very stiff, "I was content with my position in this Colony as follower of Monsieur Rombouts, and—I had my sword!"

"Nay, my Lord Derrenleigh!" she cried "You tell but the half. You were silent because generosity was filling your heart. After you, I was heir to such part of the estate as the law would give a woman, and then and there you resolved to hide your identity and let me have your right. Yes, and I noticed even then that you were the more determined to get me safely to New Haven."

"Lady Madeline," I said earnestly, "why not? Ay, why not? Who else could reign so well and so nobly at Collamore Castle as my kinswoman and distant cousin?"

"And you would really have given up your right for me?"

"Gladly! Believe, me, I was content if you had the honors. I was well placed in New York, having my patron and my sword."

"But," interrupted Rombouts, "why this masquerading on your part? Why this fictitious name of Basil Stelland?"

"Sir," I replied, "ten years ago I was a lad of eighteen years and penniless, for my father had left nothing. I resolved to be a new man amidst new scenes. I adopted a new name and came to the Colony. For ten years I have lived in this country, scarce giving heed to old England. I had dropped myself and was another man."

"Not so!" exclaimed Lady Madeline. "It was ever said that the Collamores were as generous and self-sacrificing as they were brave, and you retained that element in your nature. You proved it when—'tis wondrous strange!—you stood mute and permitted a maid innocently to usurp your rights."

I bent my head and spoke low in reply

"Nay, madam, not a maid, but one maid, and one only.

A slight flow of additional pink came into her face and her eyes fell. Not to embarrass her further I looked away. I saw Sir John Rodcliff stealing away toward his horse with downcast face and sullen eyes, a beaten, baffled man, but I heeded him but briefly. My regard returned to my friends. I saw Peter and Betsey, delighted in their humble way. I saw my patron genial and glowing. I saw Mademoiselle, a new radiance in her eyes and her face aglow with subdued pleasure. The Biting Sword had come into his own.

We arrived at New Haven without molestation from Captain Blair. Once, subsequently, I saw that knave skulking through a side alley as I walked the street, but he was out of sight quickly and I never heard of him more.

Sir John resigned all claim to the management of Lady Madeline's affairs in a curt note, and sailed promptly for England. By his services he had stood to earn rather large sums as her agent, and his downfall was a severe blow to his scantily filled pocketbook.

The mischief-breeding jewels were restored to their owner.

It came to pass that when the good ship Polly and Hannah sailed from the Colony, Monsieur Rombouts was along as my friend, so that he added to our number, which included Lady Madeline and myself, together with Peter, Betsey, Hugh and Anne. All these humbler souls I had taken into my service for life.

There was no difficulty in establishing my identity, and I became the seventh Lord Derrenleigh. Before a twelvemonth Madeline was my wife, and once again there was light and good cheer in Collamore Castle.

The End

SPRING SKEPTICISM.

People tell us that it's spring
  That the flowers soon will smile;
That the birds' gay caroling
  All our sorrows will beguile
But the branches on the tree
  Shiver like they's mighty cool.
When they tell such things to me—
  Kind o' sounds like April fool.

Roses will arrive erelong,
  An' the truant butterfly
Will be idling 'mongst the throng
  Of the bees a-buzzin' by
Fleecy clouds above will float
  Mirrored in the lilied pool—
Bring me out my overcoat,
  Kind o' sounds like April fool.

* * *

Wrongly Named.

A woman who traveled a great deal in the West was known as the most inveterate "kicker" a certain hotel had ever known.

One evening after she had been served with dessert, this lady, who was always complaining, asked the waiter why the dish served for her was called "ice cream pudding."

"If you don't like it, ma'am, I'll bring you something else," suggested the polite negro.

"Oh, it's very nice," responded the lady. "What I object to is that it should be called ice cream pudding. It's wrongly named. There should be ice cream served with it."

"Yes, ma'am," replied the waiter, "but that's jest our name for it. Lots o' dishes that way. Dey don't bring you a cottage with cottage pudding, you know."

The Spider Conquest

(Continued from page thirteen.)

The car was still speeding rapidly on its way. Dorothy sat silent, motionless, her mind in a dizzy whirl. The dark figure of the stranger huddled in the seat on her left had not moved. Who was he? She was about to turn, when a hand was laid gently on her arm, and a low voice whispered in her ear:

"Make no sound! Be courageous. I am here to protect you!"

Dorothy started in amazement. It was the voice of Donald Dart, the detective!

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* * *

Coming Down, Anyhow.

He was a man of convivial habits, well known by his Christian name, Jamie. One dark night an acquaintance found Jamie lying at the foot of an outside stair.

"Is that you, Jamie?" he asked, in a voice of the greatest astonishment.

"Aye, it's me," replied Jamie, in a resigned tone.

"Have you fa'en doon the stair?"

"Aye!" said Jamie. "I fell doon; but I was comin' doon, whether or noo."

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"I believe in every man who earns a living. I am for the average home lover—the man who wants home pleasures but hasn't a whole lot of money to spare all at once. My credit plan of buying is for him. **I want to get acquainted with all those who desire to make their homes cheerful and comfortable. I can help them get what they want.** Thousands are saying, 'Spear helped us to beautify our homes on his liberal credit plan.' I want many more friends like that. Send for my Bargain Book now and let me explain how I give **'Credit to the Nation.'**"

(Signed) Spear of Pittsburgh

"Let Spear Make Your Home Sweet Home"

Furniture—Rugs—Curtains—Stoves—Everything for the Home

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wrote Spear of Pittsburgh: "I wish you could see my home today. We're plain working people, but not a millionaire enjoys greater comforts than we do in our home." That shows what Spear can do. Spear helps you beautify your home without strain on your pocketbook, or asking unreasonable questions or letting your neighbors know your business.

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Pay a little each month. Spear's prices are lowest. He has no iron-clad rules. He will gladly trust you. More than that, Spear gives you

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You can examine and try out, at home, anything you select. If you don't want to keep the goods, send them right back at Spear's expense. Spear has many thousands of happy, friendly families on his open credit books. It's his life work. His whole heart is in it.

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to furnish your home right. It is logic and common-sense. This whole United States is run on credit. Successful business men, great factories and railroads keep going on credit. If they couldn't, this nation would go to smash. Spear's theory is that the credit of all classes of home lovers is good.

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Only $3.85—Cash 75c
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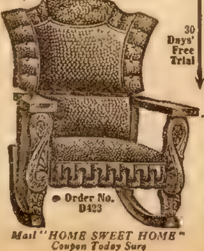
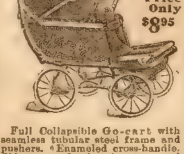


Order No. D423

Mail "HOME SWEET HOME" Coupon Today Sure

Spear's Full Collapsible Go-cart 75c Monthly
$1.50 Cash

Order No. D111
Price Only $8.95



Full Collapsible Go-cart with seamless tubular steel frame and pushers. Enameled cross-handle. Side arms, dash trimmings and corner ornaments all silver nickeled. 10-inch wheels with heavy rubber tires and foot brake. Padded reclining back, adjustable dash, long, flat, easy riding springs and large 4-bow hood and storm front with large celluloid window. Covered with best black leatherette.

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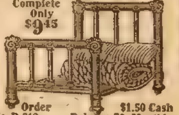

Order No. D 312
$1.50 Cash Balance, 75c Monthly

This handsome, complete Metal Bed Outfit, consisting of heavy, perfectly constructed Iron Bed, any color, 4 ft. 6 in. wide: a good woven wire spring with all steel frame; 50-pound cotton top mattress; 2 feather pillows.

Spear's Room Size Brussels Rug Bargain
Size 9 x 12 Price only $11.95
$1.50 Cash, Balance 75c per Month
No. D4736

Beautiful high color Brussels Rug, red rose design, green leaves and tan ground. Guaranteed full 9-wire Tapestry Brussels with wool facing. The greatest genuine Brussels Rug value you ever saw.

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Spear & Co., Dept. C, Pittsburgh, Pa.

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 2[illegible], 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

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For display, $2.50 each Agate Line; for Classified, 30 cents a word, per insertion for 1,250,000 circulation in the Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,250,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

It's easy for a fool to fool himself.

How easy for a weak man to break a promise.

It is better to have loved and lost than to pay alimony.

The village gossip never has time to take a vacation.

One way to make a sure thing doubtful is to bet on it.

It won't help to make a long face when you are short.

A miser is one of the things that will keep in any climate.

Nothing is the thing women cry over and men fuss about.

Bachelor maids are spinsters who haven't given up hope.

There are but two kinds of men, one talks while the other acts.

More than a watch dog is needed to keep the wolf from the door.

But the man with money to burn may not love the smell of smoke.

When you feel in a scrappy mood don't try to take a fall out of an airship.

The man who quarrels with his bread and butter is likely to dine on scraps.

Most of us prefer friends who are close-mouthed rather than close-fisted.

If you can't attract attention any other way, you might try slamming the door.

When love at first sight leads to marriage second sight is apt to lead to divorce.

A lazy man does less harm than the active man who stirs up unnecessary trouble.

The office never seeks the man with half the persistency of a creditor on the same mission.

When a woman says, "I found out something today that I promised not to tell," get ready to listen.

Cut out the fear of things that never happen and you will be able to reduce your troubles 90 per cent.

Most of the trouble in this world is due to the fact that about one-half the people in it are men and the other half women.

No doubt life would be one grand, sweet song if we could only endure our own troubles as easily as we can endure the troubles of others.

A man will give up a dollar for a fifty-cent article that he wants, and a woman will give up forty-nine cents for an article that she doesn't want—and there you are.

PEPPERS

April Fooling.

Luther Burbank was talking about April fool jokes.

"An Oakland editor," he said, played an April fool joke on a reporter last year. The reporter had a garden, and the editor came into the local room one spring afternoon and gave him a packet of dried herring roe.

"'These seed,' said the editor, running the tiny brown eggs through his fingers, 'are the seed of that rare exotic, grandiflora nux vomica belladonna. I received them yesterday from the Persian ambassador. As you have such a fine garden, I thought I'd give them to you.'

The reporter, thanking the editor gratefully, put the seeds in his vest pocket.

"'I'll plant them, sir,' he said, 'at once. I wish you'd drop in next week or thereabouts and see how they are getting on.'

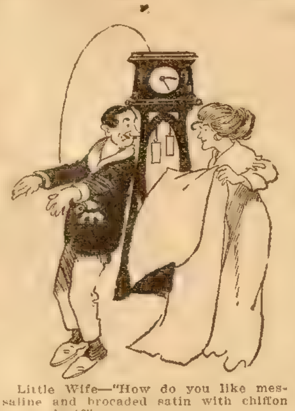
"'Thanks,' said the editor. And the next week, happening to be motoring in the reporter's neighborhood, he called. The reporter was delighted to see him.

"'I'm truly delighted to see you, sir,' he said. 'The grandiflora nux vomica belladonna have just come up.'

"He led the editor into the garden.

"'There, aren't they beautiful?' he cried.

"And in a neat semi-circle the editor beheld twenty or thirty little red herring heads peeping coyly out of the ground."



Little Wife—"How do you like messaline and brocaded satin with chiffon over velvet?"

Hubby—"What are you talking about, clothes or the platform of the woman's party?"

April Fool Criticism.

John Sloan, standing before his superb painting of "Union Square" at the Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, told an April fool story.

"A Philadelphia editor," said Mr. Sloan, "was a great joker, and so, for an April exhibition, he once sent a house painter instead of a regular art critic to write up the paintings.

"The house painter composed some very amusing and original criticisms. Thus, for an equestrian portrait of a lady he got off this:

"'John S. Major, the famous artist, has turned out a substantial job of work in No. 672. This is a lady on a horse. The lady's face is flesh pink, with hands and arms to match. The specifications called for blue eyes but these have been painted carelessly, as if with a new brush. It would have been better to break in the brush first on the body of the horse.

"'The horse is painted well, with a kind of graining effect, like imitation oak, of which any painter might be proud.

"'This picture has had several coats of best oil and pure white lead, and the paint has not been spared on the sky, which is thick and generous.

"'The picture is painted on canvass. There is a good deal of suction in canvas, and a cheaper and more lasting job could have been done on zinc.

"'Taken altogether, and considering the generous use of gilding, double strength, on the frame, the artist turned out a prime job of work in No. 672.'"

Divided Into Three Parts.

A famous clergyman tells of a lay preachers' conference in which a veteran described his method of sermon preparation.

"I take my text," he said, "and divide my sermon into three parts. In the first part I tell 'em what I'm going to tell 'em. In the second part—well, I tell 'em. In the third part I tell 'em what I've told 'em."

Pa in Trouble.

Harry Fragson tells of a simple-minded youth who was leading along a country road a horse and cart, the latter piled high with hay, when a wheel came off and the load toppled over, the hay falling in a great heap in a ditch.

A man came out of a house near by to see what had happened. "That's a bad business," he said.

"Yes," admitted the young driver, adding thoughtfully: "Pa will be mad!"

"Never mind," said the other; "we'll see what we can do to get the hay on the cart again."

"My!" ejaculated the youth, surveying the pile of hay; "pa will be mad!"

"Oh, never mind pa," replied the other by way of comfort; "pa can't see! Pa isn't here!"

"Dunno about that," said the youth; "he was ridin' on top."

A Mean Trick.

Charles T. Murphy, apropos of an attack on Tammany Hall, said to a New York reporter:

"It was, perhaps, an April fool joke on us—a very cruel April fool joke, like the one played on the American heiress.

"An American heiress married a foreigner who was, she understood, a count, but it turned out that he was only a waiter.

"When she discovered his true station, she reproached the man bitterly.

"'I knew I wasn't getting wealth with you,' she said, 'but I thought I was getting family.'

"'So you are getting family, my dear,' her husband replied, and with a nasty laugh he opened a door and revealed six little children. 'See, all these are ours. I forgot to tell you I was a widower.'"

They Thought Alike.

A Washington man and his wife, whose domestic complications are frequent, but not serious, had one evening called upon a married couple. On their way home the lady said:

"Now, in the case of the Parkers, I should say it was an ideal marriage. Really, I believe they both think absolutely alike."

"Charming people, charming people!" said hubby. "But about the thinking, Gladys, if you will notice, she generally thinks first."

Embarrassing Interruptions.

"Stump speaking is the hardest work in the world," said Senator Beveridge. "It is especially hard," he continued, smiling, "when there are hecklers in the audience."

"A friend of mine the other day was getting on famously in a stump speech.

"'Gentlemen,' he shouted, 'a man is known by his works.'

"And he paused impressively. But a heckler took advantage of the pause to yell:

"'Then you must be a gas works.'"

Didn't Believe It.

Some time ago a notorious character in the north of Ireland was sent to jail for two months. During the time of his incarceration a false report got circulated about the village that he had died in jail.

One day after coming out of jail the priest met him in the street.

"Well, Pat," said the clergyman, "I heard you were dead."

"Oh, sure, I heard it myself," replied Pat, "but I didn't believe it."

What Was Necessary.

A physician was driving through a village when he saw a man amusing a crowd with the antics of his trick dog. The doctor pulled up and said:

"My dear man, how do you manage to train your dog that way? I can't teach mine a single trick."

The man glanced up with a simple rustic look, and replied.

"Well, you see, it's this way: You have to know more'n the dog, or you can't learn him nothin'."

Tells why chicks die

J. C. Reefer, the poultry expert of 1535 Main Street, Kansas City, Mo., is giving away free a valuable book entitled "White Diarrhœa and How to Cure It." This book contains scientific facts on white diarrhœa and tells how to prepare a simple home solution that cures this terrible disease over night and actually raises 98 per cent of every hatch. All poultry raisers should write M. Reefer for one of these valuable FREE books.

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We want live, energetic hustlers, men who can make good; who are ambitious to start in a business of their own. No canvassing; no experience required; no capital necessary. We furnish everything to start. **Hundreds are making from $100 to $200 per month and expenses.** We guarantee absolute satisfaction and take all the risk. We are one of the largest woolen mills in the country and positively have the only up-to-date, high-quality, low-priced tailoring on the market.

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Cards, circulars, books, newspaper. Press $5. Larger $18, Rotary $60. Save money. Big profit printing for others. All easy, rules sent. Write factory for press catalog, TYPE, cards, paper, outfits, samples. THE PRESS CO., Meriden, Conn.

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It allays pain promptly—takes out soreness and inflammation—reduces the swelling. Successful in other cases, why not in yours? Mrs. R. M. [illegible], Federal, Kansas, had a very painful swollen vein which finally broke. She writes: "The vein bled a little but I used your **Absorbine, Jr.**, faithfully and it began to heal and look healthy. That green color and the large knots in the veins left and in a few months it was all nicely healed. It has not bothered me any since July, 1909."

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DR. J. E. CANNADAY, 1417 Court Block, Sedalia, Mo.

References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo. Send this notice to some eczema sufferer.

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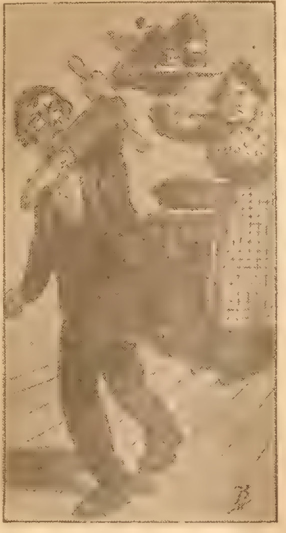
Littleby Hayes' Charity

By Hapsburg Liebe

W[illegible] Littleby Hayes [illegible] in sight of the [illegible] milestone of his life he decided that he would be a preacher. He was too small a man to hold his own with the other mountaineers in the business of fighting revenue officers and splitting rails; so perhaps his decision was flavored with wisdom. Littleby was in earnest, it seemed. He went at the Scriptures like a hart at a water brook. He had to spell his way through the Bible. He tried hard to live up to its commandments. It was when he had read through the passage that tells [illegible] that it is not good for the male species to abide on earth mateless that he got into deep water. He quit preaching long enough to seek a partner [illegible] sorrows. And, like a small boy [illegible] candy store, he chose the biggest one he could find.

Lula Belle belonged to a family of people noted for being large both in heart and in body, and who were said to be as rough as a cliff. Lula Belle was not an exception. She was tall, too. She had hands that could twist a broomstick in twain; she laughed a great deal; she divided her black hair in the middle and tied it at the back in a knot as large—fully as large—as a green peach. She thought Littleby was very cute, and accepted him before he had time to refer to the Scriptures. All went well for a while, and then Littleby ceased to be cute. He grew into a charity fiend. He was wont to give the last spoonful of cornmeal, the last bacon rind, the last bit of everything to God's impatient poor. Finally Lula Belle, the Amazon, became ashamed of calling upon her kinsmen for help; then she [illegible]



Occasionally she threw things at him.

Littleby with high scorn that he was only a husbandette. And occasionally threw small things at him.

[illegible] incidents came along in quick [illegible]on. A son was born to them, [illegible]ity years passed. The son [illegible] noted for his intelligence. The years endeared more and more the little gray preacher to the hearts of Blackfern's poor.

A stranger came to the neighborhood, a big, broad man adorned with a heavy black beard, a convincing manner, two big revolvers and the ability to shoot [illegible] spots out of the ten of spades at—name the distance. He said he was from [illegible] West, and showed a beautifully tan[illegible] hide to bear out the assertion, and seemed uncommonly interested in revenue officers. He called himself Buck. He said the name was enough for any decent man.

A week after Buck had wormed his [illegible] into the good graces of the mountaineers like a caterpillar into [illegible] of a Milan apple, a summer [illegible] miles below received honora[illegible] in the papers. A [illegible] had walked into the lobb[illegible] ver, and collected three hundred dollars in cash and several gold watch[illegible]

The next morning the preacher's son, whose name was Grigsby, found an envelope that had been shoved under the door. It contained a round hundred dollars in banknotes, and bore on one side of it these words in a labored scrawl:

"Far the pore."

The little preacher preferred not to look the gift horse in the mouth. To him the hand of Providence was at work. He hastened to the nearest store with a borrowed wagon, bought a hundred dollars' worth of necessaries, came back to Blackfern, and made a great many needy folk happy. He did this before the big noise from the summer resort reached his ears, and it was then too late to recall the deed.

"Grig," he remarked to his son, who was sitting in the door whittling aim[illegible]y on a bit of white pine, "I'm shore bad disapp'inted. I shore thought I [illegible] the best community in the whole [illegible]. But I find that I hain't. Thar's [illegible] thief amongst us. He's a bad p'tater, and he's li'ble to spile the whole bar'l. But I know who done it, Grig—or I [illegible]k it so strong it's the same as [illegible]win' it. I'm a little man, Grig, and a preacher to boot; but, Grig, with God's help I'm a goin' to take yore rifle, and a[illegible] Buck, and take him to town and turn him over to the law."

"You hain't a-goin' to do no sech a thing, pap!" [illegible]red Grig, the pride of his parents' [illegible]. "Buck'd snip you with a bullet quicker'n scat. Let the off'cers 'tend to it. It's their bizness, and not yores. Ca'm yoreself, pap. You're as narvous as a gyrl a-watchin' her pet feller marry somebuddy else. You're a shiverin' like a wet dawg. Set down, for goodness' sake, pap!"

"I bet ye 'twasn't Buck," said Lula Belle, anxious for the safety of her spouse. "I bet ye 'twas somebuddy else. You jest let the law dig it's own p'tater patch, pap. You hain't big enough to wake Buck up if he was asleep."

The preacher began to act like a boy who has sat upon a pin. His brobdingnagian wife had been unwise in alluding to his being undersized; it was his sore spot, his smallness, no doubt because he had been so often and so mercilessly reminded of it.

"Whar's that thar rifle at!" he snorted, jamming his spectacles in a rear trousers pocket and laying his handkerchief lightly on the table beside him. "I'll [illegible]ow you, you old mule, I'll show you [illegible]huther I cain't wake Buck up or not!"

"Me—a mule!" gasped Lula Belle, clasping her hands in a way in which her husband clasped his when he prayed. [illegible]

"[illegible], sirree, that's what I said, [illegible]uly—you old, spavined, [illegible]ed, botty mule!"

[illegible] his son's rifle and went [illegible] cabin in a gait that gave [illegible] the lie. His wife threw a stick of wood at a hen that was foraging in the lettuce bed in the front yard, and watched the angry little servant of the Lord disappear among the laurels [illegible] the mountainside.

"Thank God!" she said, when he had [illegible]. "He [illegible]ted like a reel man then." She turned to Grig. "Reckon Buck'll hurt him?" she asked dizzily.

"Nothin' more'n spank him, I guess," smiled Grig. "But I reckon I'd better foller him and see what happens." He drew from under the front steps a short-barreled revolver, a weapon his father had never seen, and hurried away.

The preacher asked everywhere for Buck. Nobody had seen him that morning. One man told him that Buck had gone off on a coon hunt by himself and without a dog, and at that Littleby Hayes narrowed his eyes and whispered to his rifle, "I told you so."

But the preacher found the Westerner by noon. Buck was coming in from the Bill's Creek section, and he didn't have any game. Old Hayes cocked the rifle and leveled it toward the pocket of the big fellow's blue flannel shirt.

"In the name o' the law," said the [illegible], "I arrest you!"

The smooth and convincing voice and th[illegible]ightforward gaze of the West[illegible] just one minute in making Littleby Hayes believe that the accusation was utterly and totally false. Littleby Hayes was wont to judge men largely by their eyes. He begged Buck's pardon, shook hands with him, and went back to his cabin.

"It shore wasn't Buck," he told Lula Belle.

"I said it might not be," replied his wife. "[illegible] Littleby, hain't a dawg. H'ist yoreself out and bring in some wood, Littleby Hayes, if you want anything to eat!"

"[illegible]" called the [illegible] [illegible]e son had just returned. "You bring it [illegible]"

Rheumatism

Remarkable Home Cure Given by One Who Had It—He Wants Every Sufferer to Benefit.

Send No Money—Just Your Address

Years of awful [illegible] and misery have taught this man, M[illegible] H. [illegible], New York, how terrible an [illegible] piness rheumatism is, and ha[illegible] pathy with all unfortunates who are [illegible] grasp. He wants every rheumatic victim to know how he was cured. Read what he says:

"I Had Sharp Pains Like Lightning Flashes Shooting Through My Joints."

"In the spring of 1893 I was attacked by [illegible]ular and Inflammatory Rheumatism. I suffered [illegible] only those who have it know, for over three years. I tried remedy after remedy, and doctor after doctor, but such relief as I received was only temporary. Finally, I found a remedy that cured me completely, and it has never returned. I have given it to a number who were terribly afflicted and even bedridden with Rheumatism, and it effected a cure in every case.

I want every sufferer from any form of rheumatic trouble to try this [illegible] power. Don't send a cent; simply mail your name and address and I will send it free to try. After you have used it and it has proven itself to be that long-looked-for means of curing your Rheumatism, you may send the price of it, one dollar, but, understand, I do not [illegible] your money unless you are perfectly satisfied to send it. Isn't that fair? Why suffer any longer when positive relief is thus offered you free? Don't delay. Write today. MARK H. JACKSON, No. 1008 Gurney Bldg., Syracuse, N. Y."

TOBACCO, LIQUOR or MORPHINE Habits Easily CURED. Hill's Chloride of Gold Tablets will cure any case in from ten to thirty days. Perfectly harmless, cause no sickness, can be given secretly in tea or coffee. Particulars sent sealed FREE. The Ohio Chemical Works, Box 514 Swanton, Ohio.

LADIES Send 4 cents in stamps for our **Book on Women and Her Troubles** Should be in every home. WORTH MANY TIMES ITS COST Vital Remedy Co., 147 W. 33th St., New York.

MENDING TISSUE The Wonder of the age. No sewing or darning. Repairs clothing, silk, satin, cotton goods, ribbons, fabrics of all kinds, kid gloves, mackintoshes, umbrellas, parasols, stockings, etc. Package, postpaid, 10 cents, three packages, 25 cents. Address PENN PUBLISHING CO., Parnassus, Pa.

Money-Saving Prices on STEEL Shingles!

Why fool with wood shingles that *burn* and *rot* when 135,000 people have found Edwards "Interlocking" Steel Shingles far and away superior? They are fireproof, lightning-proof, and rust-proof (made so by Edwards famous "Tightcote" Process) and *cost less than wood!* You can lay them yourself with hammer and nails. Come in big sheets easy to handle. Put on over old roof or sheathing if you like.

Edwards STEEL Shingles

Factory Prices—Freight Paid

No expert workmen, no special tools, no painting. And the handsomest roof you ever saw. Your neighbors are struck dumb with admiration. They'll all want roofs like yours.

EDWARDS OFFER Write Edwards today and get his astounding low price, with freight prepaid to your station.

Ask for Book No. 3352 and give size of roof if possible. (148)

THE EDWARDS MFG. CO. 3302-3352 Lock Street, Cincinnati, Ohio

FREE booklet—how to master the AUTO TRADE—spare times—at home. Let us start you as a CHAUFFEUR OR MECHANICIAN—we've started hun[illegible] SEND NOW for PROOFS & FREE BOOK. DYKE'S SCHOOL OF MOTORING, Box 3 Roe Bldg., ST. LOUIS, MO.

WARNING TO THIN PEOPLE

Excessive thinness is a sure sign of mal-nutrition. Don't continue in that unhealthy condition, sub[illegible] to all sorts of aches and pains and in constant danger of contracting dangerous and deadly diseases. No matter what you are or where you live, no matter whether you are man or woman, old or young, there is help for you right at hand. Our wonderful offer is open to everyone. Waymor will enable you to get the full nutritive value out of the food you eat. One tablet taken with each meal will enable your system to [illegible]ilate flesh forming foods and thus properly nour[illegible] tissues and blood. Not a secret or "pate[illegible]"

No Pay Until Weight Increases

We have such implicit confidence in the ability of Waymor to increase your weight that we will send you this treatment at our risk. We do not ask you to pay in advance. You take the tablets and when you are benefited, simply send us $1.00. If you are not en[illegible] with [illegible]—there will be no charge. We take your word.

DON'T SEND A CENT. Sim[illegible] send us your name and address and we will immediately forward you a $1.00 trial treatment in plain confidential wrapper. If it benefits you send us the money—if not, you owe us not[illegible]. Send to-day and note the rapid improvement.

WAYMOR COMPANY, Dept. D, Was[illegible] D. C.

PILES WONDERFUL new disc[illegible] reli[illegible] DON [illegible]

WANTED—RIDER AGENTS IN EACH T[illegible] and district t[illegible] ride and [illegible] [illegible] 1914 Model "Ranger" bicycle furnished by us. Our agents every[illegible]king money fast. *Write at once for full particulars and special offer.* NO MONEY REQUIRED until you receive and approve of your bicycle. We ship to anyone, anywhere [illegible] S. *without a cent deposit* in advance, *prepay freight*, and allow TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL during which time you may ride the bicycle and put it to any test you wish. If you are then not perfectly satisfied or do not wish to keep the bicycle you may ship it back to us at our expense and *you will not be out one cent.*

LOW FACTORY PRICES We furnish the highest grade bicycles it is possible to make at one small profit above actual factory cost. You save $10 to [illegible]iddlemen's profits by buying direct of us and have the manufacturer's guarantee behind your bicycle. DO NOT BUY a bicycle or a pair of tires from *anyone* at *any price* until you receive our catalogues and learn our unheard of *factory prices* and *remarkable special offer*.

YOU WILL BE ASTONISHED when you receive our beautiful catalogue and study our superb models at the *wonderful low prices* we can make you. We sell the highest grade bicycles at lower prices than any other factory. We are satisfied with $1.00 profit above factory cost. BICYCLE DEALERS, you can sell our bicycles under your own name plate at double our prices. Orders filled the day rece[illegible]

SECOND-HAND BICYCLES—a limited number taken in trade by our Chicago retail stores will be closed out at once, at $3 to $8 each. Descriptive bargain list mailed free.

TIRES, COASTER BRAKE rear wheels, inner tubes, lamps, cyclometers, parts, repairs and everything in the bicycle line at half usual prices.

DO NOT WAIT—but write today for our *Large Catalogue* beautifully illustrated and containing a great fund of interesting matter and useful information. It only costs a postal to get everything. Write it now.

MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. N-53, CHICAGO, ILL.

GREAT SPECIAL OFFER 80¢

—TO NEW CUSTOMERS ONLY—

HAYNER BOTTLED-IN-BOND WHISKEY

Full Quart—Only 80 Cents—Express Paid

THIS is a special introductory offer we are making to NEW customers only—and if YOU have never tried Hayner Whiskey, we want you to try it NOW. Cut out this ad—mail it with your order and 80 cents in stamps or coin—and the full quart bottle of *Hayner Private Stock Bottled-in-Bond Whiskey* will be sent in sealed case—express charges paid. It's great—a *Bottled-in-Bond* whiskey of the finest kind—sealed with the U. S. Government's Green Stamp over the cork—your assurance it is fully aged, full 100% proof, full measure—as good and pure as can be produced. It's *sure* to please you—*sure* to win your future trade. You take no chances—you know we are responsible—been in business 47 years—capital $500,000.00 fully paid. Don't put this off—*order right now*—and goods will go forward by first express.

NOTE: Orders from Ariz., Wyo., Colo., Mont., and all states West thereof must call for $1.00 for one quart—express paid. LB-23

(All future orders must be for FOUR quarts or more)

Address our nearest office

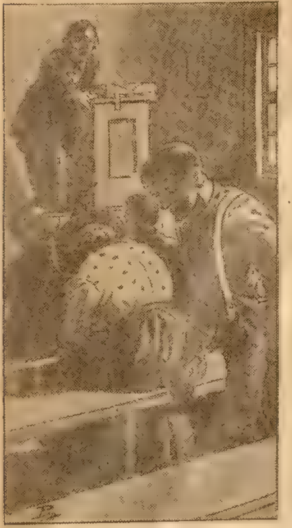
THE HAYNER DISTILLING CO., Dept. S-30

Dayton, Ohio St. Louis, Mo. Boston, Mass. New Orleans, La. Toledo, Ohio Indianapolis, Ind. Kansas City, Mo. St. Paul, Minn. Jacksonville, Fla.

Lula Belle went for the wood.

On the following Sunday morning, old Hayes mounted his crude platform and began to look his flock over with the air a woman wears when she surveys her onion-patch with a view of finding a neighbor's marauding hen. He saw that Buck was in his accustomed place over a knothole in the floor—Buck had the tobacco habit. He also noted that no sheep or lambs were out of the fold.

"Brethren and sisters," he began, in his cracked and drawling voice, "if that



"Do you confess?"

thar money hadn't 'a' been put under my door, I'd 'a' thought the robber belonged in some other section than this here. But the money fixes the guilt on somebody in this here community. And I'm now a-goin' to show him up to the good people o' Blackfern. Brethren and sisters, I'm a hard old squirrel to fool."

"Yes," he continued, as though very sure of himself, "the robber is in this here church today. He's a-settin' on a bench clost to a woman. His hair and eyes is black, and he hain't got on no necktie. He's got on a cotton shirt, jeans pants, suspenders, and no belt. His hair needs combin', and his boots needs greasin'. His face is a turnin' jest a mite red, and afore another minit has went by it'll be as red as a turkey gobbler's snout. Black sheep o' the mountain, you shore orter turn red! You lowdown thief! A man wh'd steal is a man who wouldn't stop at murder for ten cents. Turn red——"

A man went to his feet. He was conscious-stricken and blind to the fact that the preacher's description would have fitted nine out of every ten men in the house. This man cried tremulously:

"Cut that out!"

Littleby Hayes put his hands on the pulpit and bent forward. The man who was standing before him was the pride of his heart and the light of his life, his son Grig!

"Do you confess?" old Hayes asked, after a little period of silence.

"Yes." answered the son.

"What made you do it?" The preacher's voice now seemed to have borrowed something from the pallor of his ashen face.

"I done it in the name o' charity," Grig shot back angrily. "And charity begins at home. You've starved me and maw for years and years, acause you give everything to the pore. Even when I'd work and make money o' my own you'd beg that for the pore. This here charity bizness was so strong in me that I give a third o' the haul to you for the pore. Well, what're you a-going to do about it, pap?"

"I'm a goin' to take you to town and turn you over to the jail," declared the father, sternly.

The Westerner called Buck rose to his feet.

"You won't do anything of the kind, sir," he drawled. "There's nobody here who don't sympathize with the boy, and nobody will ever tell. The rest of the money and the watches can be sent back on the quiet, and the law won't be any the wiser. Now forget it, parson, and blaze away on your sermon."

And the preacher accepted the advice.

* * *

One evening when Tommy, aged 5, was having his daily bath, his nurse was trying, with small success to scrub his grimy little knees.

After watching her for some time he said, patronizingly:

"Never mind, Bertha. Don't you know that's the dark meat, anyway?"

An Engineer's Nerve

(Continued from page nine.)

stretched, and as he grasped it, he knew that he had found one friend.

Now they were within a hundred feet of the switch. Once by that point and behind the protecting cars of cotton stored on the passing siding, and his train and crew would be safe. Twenty feet now. They were at the point of the switch. There was a gleam of something like triumph in Corbin's eyes, as he turned and smiled down upon Harding. Then the smile froze upon his lips, as there came a sudden lunge, and the engine swept away from the main line.

"Jump, jump!" Corbin cried, as he sprang to his feet. "She's taken the siding. Jump!"

Only one man that heard his voice obeyed. That was the crouching head brakeman upon the engine's steps. The next second, with a grinding and crashing of splintered timbers, the engine plowed into the cars ahead, while the cars behind piled up, buckled, surged forward, and buried the engine beneath the mass of wreckage.

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Men Are Queer.

Fred Tallmadge was brought up in a household consisting of one worshiping mother, three adoring sisters, many intermittent aunts, and an occasional grandmother. So he managed to escape being a perfect lady only because he played football and boxed in spite of his female adorers' shudders and tears.

Most of the feminine contingent had the uncomfortable feeling that it was ungentlemanly of Fred to grow so tall and broad-shouldered, but they got used to it after a time. And they hung upon his every word. The motto of the Tallmadge household was: "Whatever Fred does is right, even if it is wrong!"

Fred did not at first believe his sister Sally when she told him that the name of the school friend who was coming to visit was Miss Woyce.

"Woyce!" he repeated, distastefully. "What a wretched name! It makes a fellow feel that he is lisping! Well, I don't suppose it can be helped!"

"I don't suppose so," said his sister, apologetically. "I didn't exactly ask Rose to pay me this visit—she just wrote that she wanted to come to Chicago and would take advantage of my many invitations."

"I'll put you two into a taxi," Tallmadge said, the day he and Sally met the visitor at the station. "I have an appointment and cannot go across the town with you."

"Mercy, no!" Miss Woyce objected. She was small and she seemed to sparkle. "We'll go in a bus, because I want to do some shopping before we go out to the house. Thank you, Mr. Tallmadge, but I really prefer the bus!"

Tallmadge stood blinking on the sidewalk till the jaunty feather on the visitor's hat had bobbed out of view. He felt odd, though he could not tell why.

Before dinner was ended that evening he had found the answer. It was because he and his opinion were cheerfully pushed aside as of no account when, in the opinion of the visitor, they were of no account. And it was amazing how much she found to object to in him.

"I'm afraid you are dreadfully spoiled," Miss Woyce told him. "I thought you were going to burst into tears when I explained how entirely wrong you were in your attitude toward woman suffrage. I know it is hard to be found out!"

"'Found out!'" repeated Tallmadge, stiffly.

"Why, of course," said Miss Woyce.

"I'm afraid," his sister Sally said to him the next day, "that Rose is a terrible bother to you, Fred! Now, don't put yourself out for her just because she is my guest!"

"Oh, here!" Rose called after Tallmadge, the next instant, as he started for town. "Would you mind leaving these gloves to be cleaned? Thank you so much!"

"We never bother Fred with errands," Sally told her in awed tones, after her brother's scandalized acceptance of the commission.

"Don't you!" asked Rose, airily. "Then it's time you began!"

Sally was intensely relieved when Rose's visit drew to a close. She felt that Fred had behaved nobly. He had been contradicted, disagreed with, ordered around, and made fun of—and he had endured it with magnificent self-repression.

"How nice," she said sweetly, the first night after Rose's departure, "how nice it is to be back in the old ways! Isn't it, Fred?"

"Of course," said that individual. He was moving about restlessly instead of sitting down to read as usual. "I think," he added, "I'll go downtown."

When he returned his mother was waiting up for him with a warm drink. He seldom went out in the evening.

"Something is wrong with Fred," Sally told her sisters anxiously, a few days later. "He seems so disturbed and restless! He must be coming down with something!"

He came down to breakfast the next morning bearing a suitcase and looking embarrassed. "Yes, I'm going on a little trip," he told his amazed family. "I—er—you see, Rose said in her last letter that I might come and see her. I—er—I guess I won't have time for my coffee if I catch the train."

"And we ne-never even kn-knew," Sally emerged from the general weeping long enough to say, "that he was writing to her! Why, Rose isn't at all the sort of girl he is used to! If men aren't queer!"

* * *

A Disappointment.

A medical man thought very highly of a certain aerated water, and by his assiduous recommendations procured for it a celebrity it justly deserved. He acted solely in the interests of humanity generally, and expected no return. To his surprise, he received one morning an effusive letter from the proprietors to the effect that his recommendations had done them so much good that they "ventured to send him a hundred——" Here the page came to an end. "This will never do," said the doctor; "it is very kind, but I could not think of accepting anything!"

Then he turned the page and found that the sentence ran—— "of our circulars for distribution!"

* * *

Getting His Picture.

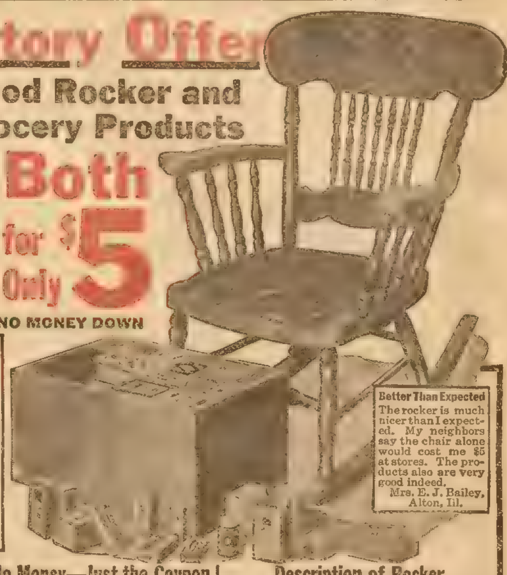
"What a lively baby!" said Flaherty. "Have you had his picture took yet?"

"Not yet," said Fogerty, the proud father. "We thried to, but afther an hour's lost labor the photygrafter rayferred us to a movin' picture studio."

Big Introductory Offer

This Fine Hardwood Rocker and This $5 List of Grocery Products

Just to get you acquainted with the high quality of Crofts & Reed Grocery Products and especially our **Money Saving Factory-to-Home Plan** of buying, we will send you the entire list of Products below and this Beautiful Hardwood Rocker **both for only $5.** We don't ask you to send the money in advance. Simply fill out and mail the coupon. We will ship both Rocker and Products—then you are to use the goods just as if paid for. Use the Rocker—have your friends try it. Test the Products for quality, quantity and freshness. Take plenty of time—you have full 30 days to find out if this is a bargain or not. You haven't a cent invested—you take no risk whatever. We take goods back—pay all return charges—make no charge for goods used in the test.



Both for $5 Only

NO MONEY DOWN

Better Than Expected

The rocker is much nicer than I expected. My neighbors say the chair alone would cost me $5 at stores. The products also are very good indeed.

Mrs. E. J. Bailey,
Alton, Ill.

Here are the Products You Get For $5 With Chair Included

	Retail Price		Retail Price
1 pkg. B Oats, 1½ lbs.	15	1 pkg. Macaroni, 1 lb.	15
1 Bottle Vanilla Ex., 2 oz.	25	1 pkg. Corn Starch, 1 lb.	10
1 Can Cream Tar. B. Pdr.	25	1 pkg. Salt, 5 lbs.	10
2 Cans Pork and Beans, large size	30	1 pkg. Bak. Soda, 1 lb.	10
1 pkg. Unsweetened Chocolate, ½ lb.	35	1 pkg. Black Pepper, Ground, ¼ lb.	10
1 lb. Ceylon Tea	60	3 bars Kero. L'dy Soap	15
1 pkg. Rice, 2 lbs.	25	2 pkgs. Washing Powder	20
1 pkg. Cocoanut, ½ lb.	20	2 pks. Scouring Powder	20
1 Jar Peanut Btr., ½ lb.	20	1 pkg. Gloss Starch, 3 lbs.	25
1 Jar Orange Marmalade, ½ lb.	20	1 Bx Fragrant Bouquet Toilet Soap (3 bars)	25
1 pkg. Carmel Pudding	15	10 brs. Fam. L'dy Soap	50
			$5.00

30 Days' Trial Before You Pay

After you have had the Rocker and Grocery Products 30 days, if you are thoroughly satisfied, you send us only $5.00. If not satisfied, write us and we will take them away, pay all return charges so you won't be out one cent. We make this remarkable offer to induce you to try our Products and see how you can get hundreds of useful articles in Furniture, Clothing, Silverware, Jewelry, Dishes, Glassware—anything for the home without extra cost.

Send No Money—Just the Coupon

Write your name and address plainly in the coupon below—give two references, your pastor and banker, or a business man—mail it to us. We will ship the $5.00 worth of Products and Rocker immediately. When you get them, if for any reason they are not satisfactory after you have tested them 30 days or before the 30 days are up, you can return them at our expense. You are not obliged to keep them. We leave everything to you.

Description of Rocker

This rocker is made of selected hardwood, is screw fastened in the most approved manner, which any furniture man will tell you is the most satisfactory way of putting a chair of this kind together. Back is artistically shaped, has seven turned spindles joining the top and bottom panel. Front and back posts also are turned. Arms are shaped, strongly fastened to back and seat.

The finish of this rocker is equal to that of a chair selling for [illegible] to $10.00. It is finished in the very best American Quartered Oak and the polish is superb. You would pay as much or more at a furniture store as our price of $5.00 for a rocker as good as this one, and you would get no products with it. It is 38 inches high, 24 inches wide and 15 inches from the floor.

Crofts & Reed

FREE!

This Pound Box of Our Famous Chocolate Creams

Given as an extra present if cash accompanies your order. Retail value 70c.

(208)

Crofts & Reed Co., Dept. A 277 Chicago, Ill.

If your neighbors wish to take advantage of this offer they may do so by copying this coupon.

CROFTS & REED CO. Dept. A277 CHICAGO.

Please send above list of Products and Rocker and if both are satisfactory I will send you $5 in 30 days' time. Otherwise I agree to return unused products with rocker to you. You may refer to those below for references.

My Name ....

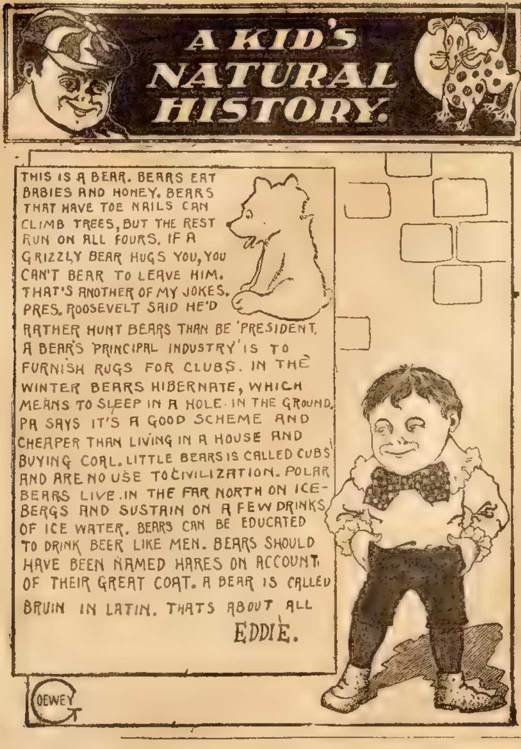
Street [illegible]

Reference No. 1 [illegible]

Reference No. [illegible]

(If cash is sent with order [illegible])

THE FAIRY CORNER


A KID'S NATURAL HISTORY.
THIS IS A BEAR. BEARS EAT BABIES AND HONEY. BEARS THAT HAVE TOE NAILS CAN CLIMB TREES, BUT THE REST RUN ON ALL FOURS. IF A GRIZZLY BEAR HUGS YOU, YOU CAN'T BEAR TO LEAVE HIM. THAT'S ANOTHER OF MY JOKES. PRES. ROOSEVELT SAID HE'D RATHER HUNT BEARS THAN BE 'PRESIDENT. A BEAR'S 'PRINCIPAL INDUSTRY' IS TO FURNISH RUGS FOR CLUBS. IN THE WINTER BEARS HIBERNATE, WHICH MEANS TO SLEEP IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND. PA SAYS IT'S A GOOD SCHEME AND CHEAPER THAN LIVING IN A HOUSE AND BUYING COAL. LITTLE BEARS IS CALLED CUBS AND ARE NO USE TO CIVILIZATION. POLAR BEARS LIVE IN THE FAR NORTH ON ICEBERGS AND SUSTAIN ON A FEW DRINKS OF ICE WATER. BEARS CAN BE EDUCATED TO DRINK BEER LIKE MEN. BEARS SHOULD HAVE BEEN NAMED HARES ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR GREAT COAT. A BEAR IS CALLED BRUIN IN LATIN. THATS ABOUT ALL
EDDIE.
DEWEY

April Fool Trick.

Take sofa cushions, books, dishes, etc., and scatter them in the middle of the floor. Then select some one, and tell him to walk around and between these articles, so as to familiarize his mind with the relative positions of the various articles.

Then blindfold him and tell him to pick his way between all those articles without touching any of them. In the meanwhile some one should rapidly and noiselessly remove all the articles.

It will prove very funny to see the blindfolded player stepping softly and carefully along so as to avoid the articles which he believes to be in his path. He will be so pleased to think he has succeeded. Then he will look so silly when he discovers he has been made a fool of.

FRECKLES

Now Is the Time to Get Rid of These Ugly Spots.

There's no longer the slightest need of feeling ashamed of your freckles, as the prescription othine—double strength—is guaranteed to remove these homely spots.

Simply get an ounce of othine—double strength—from your druggist, and apply a little of it night and morning and you should soon see that even the worst freckles have begun to disappear, while the lighter ones have vanished entirely. It is seldom that more than an ounce is needed to completely clear the skin and gain a beautiful clear complexion.

Be sure to ask for the double strength othine as this is sold under guarantee of money back if it fails to remove freckles.

* * *

Free Asthma Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Bldg., St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for asthma, in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to any one who will write him for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

April.

The name April comes from the word aperis, to open, because it is then that the trees burst forth into leaf and blossom. The icy fetters which for many months have locked the streams and the lakes in their rigid embrace break, and the waters flow freely once more. The Saxons called it Oster-monat, "east month," doubtless owing to the prevalence of east winds. With the Jews, it was "ear-month," the time when the young corn showed in the ear.

Proverbs relating to April all breathe indulgence. Whatever caprice April may be guilty of, good results are bound to follow. For instance:

"A cold April
The barn will fill."

"An April flood
Carries away the frog and his brood."

"April showers
Make May flowers."

"When April blows his horn
It's good for both hay and corn."

From time immemorial, in almost every land, the first of April has been the Fool's Day of the year. How it earned this peculiar character is not known.

A Vacation.

Hazel Hoisington, who lives in Adrian, Mich., owns a monkey, which is very likely named Jocko, and Jocko wanted to have a holiday. He didn't ask anybody, but one day just watched his chance and hopped out of the house. He was gone a week, and Hazel Hoisington had decided that he would never come back, when a deputy sheriff discovered something in a tree. He thought it was an owl and was going to shoot it, but just in time he saw that it was a monkey. He determined to capture the monk, and so he called all the other deputy sheriffs and they gave chase. The monkey made good time through the treetops, but the trees gave out at last, and he made for the chimney of a deserted house. There he was caught and put under arrest and taken thus to his mistress, who was very glad to see him again.

Buried Alive.

Workmen in a new building in Pittsburgh heard a noise inside the wall, and finally they decided they ought to open the wall and see what was the matter. They tore out plaster and lath, and tile, and in one of the tiles they found a cat with four kittens only a few days old.

The cat had crept unseen into the tile and the workmen had walled her up, and in that dark prison her kittens had been born. None of the beasts were any the worse for their imprisonment after they had been rescued.

TWO COUSINS.

Sweet April sat on a black-fringed cloud,
A cloud with a silver lining,
And into her hair of purest gold
Was a rainbow deftly twining.

"I wish," she said, with wrinkled brow,
"That Cousin March would hurry
Here I must wait till he gets through,
He ought to know I'd worry!

"I've work to do with Mother Earth;
I'm wild to be about it.
You think I don't know how to toil?
Oh, dear, how can you doubt it!"

Sweet April shed a few real tears,
Which fell on March retiring,
And then she smiled and shook her head
Her rainbow much admiring.

"I wouldn't be a blustering boy!"
She said as March drew nearer
"I'm going to laugh a whole month long;
A month will ne'er be clearer."

As cousins met and clasped their hands
Before their ways they parted
March slyly tweaked sweet April's ear,
A flood of tears he started

"Oh, oh!" jeered March, as April sobbed,
"Do you call this fine weather?
Your month is here, and first you cry—
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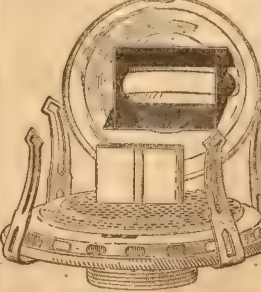

Bob Bright's Adventures

Or, Hunting the Golden Butterfly

By Weldon J. Cobb

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Begun in No. 11, March 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VIII.

ACHILLES' SECRET.

BOB BRIGHT was too full of life, hope, and energy to allow even a serious situation like the present one to frighten him. At the same time he was something more than startled, and his companion was dismayed.

"I say, here's a bad kettle of fish," observed Achilles.

"Yes, that man seems to be in earnest," agreed Bob. "He's just taken it into his head to squelch us right at the start, and here we are."

"You don't really suppose his idea is to carry us away, do you?" propounded Achilles, quite anxiously.

"He's doing it, isn't he!" submitted Bob. "I tell you, Achilles, this is no boy's play. We've meddled in that man's business, and he's put a decided quietus on us. He's a desperate-looking fellow, and I shan't be surprised at anything he does."

"I didn't know they defied the law and kidnaped people this way any more, except in the story books. What you going to do?" asked Achilles.

"What can we do, except to take our medicine and see what comes of it?" demanded Bob.

"Suppose we don't get back tonight?" asked Achilles.

"Almost? I guess not!" vociferated Bob. "We'll be quite lucky if we get back in a week. There's a reason why this man is afraid to let us go, a great big reason, especially as to myself. You can fancy what a bold bad fellow he is when he locks people up at his will and steals a boat."

"But he can't keep it up, you know," declared Achilles. "There's sure to be a pursuit. He's certain to be arrested in the end."

"He's risking all that," said Bob. "He's humming us along for keeps, just the same, and he knows how to run the boat."

There were two portholes covered with glass in the room the boys found themselves in. Bob went to one of these and peered out. He could see the shores of the lake swiftly receding from view, the beach lights becoming dim flickers of radiance. Then he went over to where the barefooted boy lay, stooped down, and setting the lantern near to him gave him a good looking over.

Somehow, the forlorn, sad-faced, poorly-dressed lad appealed to Bob in a pathetic way. His was a strongly sympathetic nature. He had seen the boy on two occasions only. On both he had found him helpless and in distress. Always the champion of the oppressed and friendless Bob felt that this lad's affairs were in some way linked with his own, and he made up his mind he would stand by him to the last.

He set to work to arouse the sleeper, but utterly failed. The slumberer would move uneasily and groan, but he seemed sunk in a deep lethargy, the result of illness or medicine.

"It's no use," admitted Bob, at last, "he won't wake up. Hello! I've got an idea."

His eyes roving about their dismal prison place, Bob noticed a heap of rubbish in one corner. There were boxes, scraps of paper and bottles. He went over and pulled these latter about until he had found one with a cork. Then he came back to the lantern, sat down, and drew his memorandum book from his pocket.

Bob tore out two blank pages and covered them with writing. This done, he rolled them up and poked them into the bottle, drove the cork in as tightly as he could, and, again visiting the rubbish heap, found a broken hammer. Bob aimed, and it crashed through one of the portholes.

"Going to send a message afloat?" observed Achilles, who had noted all these operations with interest.

"Exactly," responded Bob, casting the bottle through the aperture. "That's better—it gives us a little fresh air."

Achilles found a box near one side of the room and sat down on it. Bob stood at the now open porthole, drinking in the pure, cool air. Excitement was fast dying out, and he began to reflect seriously. Judging from the way the man on deck was running the Arrow, he was bent on no brief voyage, and seemed intent on getting a good start against any active pursuit.

"I don't suppose we can do anything?" observed Achilles, rubbing his head in a lost, thoughtful way

"Hardly, until that man lets us," replied Bob.

"I wonder what the academy people will think when we don't show up?"

"Why, of course they'll miss the Arrow," explained Bob, "and of course they will try to find out what has become of it. They may overhaul us. The man here may set us ashore somewhere. I'm not going to worry about it."

Bob tried to settle down philosophically, but found himself restless and uneasy. He got thinking about Aunt Mary. If he was long kept a captive and she was notified of his mysterious absence, he could fancy how it would distress her.

"This man didn't shut us in here and take all the trouble of having us around just because he found us here," Bob reasoned it out. "No, sir, he has a motive in keeping me, at least, here. I'll be mighty glad when I find out why this barefooted boy wanted to see me so urgently."

Achilles had resigned himself to circumstances, it seemed. He sat on the box, and had taken a huge memorandum book from his pocket. It must have been filled with interesting notes, for he became engrossed in going over it.

"What are you so busy at, Achilles?" inquired Bob, after watching curiously his queer, erratic companion with his grave, studious ways.

"I'm sort of grouping up a lot of ideas in my mind," was the reply. "You see, this getting captured breaks in on my plans for getting the use of the Arrow, and has disturbed my calculations, but maybe not for good. I want to keep my scheme fresh in my mind, so when it does come along right I'll be in shape to carry it out."

"Why, what scheme?" inquired Bob.

"The one I had in view in taking a trip in the Professor's launch," explained the young scientist. "You know I wanted you to go with me."

"Yes," nodded Bob.

"And I was going to tell you all about it beforehand."

"That's what you hinted at," said Bob.

"Well, as I told you, I was figuring out a scheme for fame and fortune. In fact, I have several such. This particular one, though, was very attractive and interesting."

"I'm alive with curiosity to know what it is, Achilles," pressed Bob.

"Well, I guess I'll tell you all about it now, while we're all quiet and alone, and with plenty of time to go over it."

"Good for you! Fire away!" directed Bob.

"It's a scheme for a hunt—a big hunt," announced Achilles impressively.

"Hunt for what?"

"The Golden Butterfly."

CHAPTER IX.

A YOUNG SCIENTIST.

"THE Golden Butterfly?" repeated Bob Bright, vaguely. "That sounds fine, but—what does it mean?"

"Twenty-five hundred dollars," replied Achilles, with perfect seriousness.

"That's mixing it up worse yet," declared Bob. "Make it plainer, Achilles."

"Very well," proceeded the young scientist, "you remember that blue sheet of paper you rescued for me when it blew away among the rigging on the steamer?"

"The day I was coming down shore bound for the academy? Perfectly well, Achilles."

"You know I told you then that I prized the letter greatly, and would not have lost it for a good deal."

"Go ahead, there's a good fellow, and get down to the meat of the proposition."

"Well, that letter was from the secretary of the celebrated Smithsonian Institute."

"I noticed that in the heading of the letter," said Bob.

"You know that the Smithsonian Institute is a great scientific institution under the auspices of the United States Government. It is, in fact, the greatest exponent of advanced science in the world."

"Do you belong to it, Achilles?" inquired Bob, with perfect gravity.

"Do I?" was the amazed reply. "Hardly, Bright. In the first place, I'm not old enough. Next, I don't know enough. Lastly, you have got to be a great scientist, or at least do some big scientific thing, to have that great institution even look at you sideways."

"Is that so, now?" propounded Bob "What's your interest in it, then."

"I'll try to explain," replied Achilles, in his oracular way. "I found out some time since that the Institute had a marvelous museum of butterflies. Perhaps there isn't a butterfly extant that is not to be found among its hundreds of exhibition cases. The Institute has sent out a circular to the scientific world that it had no actual specimen, only drawings and photographs, of Golden Xanthidia—the Golden Butterfly. It was thought that the species was totally extinct. However, expert scientists have reported from time to time a sight of what they were sure was a Golden Xanthidia on the wing. This has encouraged the Institute to hope they may secure a specimen. They offered a reward of two thousand five hundred dollars to any person capturing a live or fossil one."

"That's simply great, and mighty interesting," voted Bob.

"I wrote to the Smithsonian Institute for details," explained Achilles, "and received, in that blue letter you rescued, some very valuable information. The Institute had already sent me a colored print of the butterfly, made in London, way back in the last century. Would you like to see it?"

"I certainly would," declared Bob.

Achilles groped into an inside pocket and brought out a heavy manila envelope. He handled it gingerly, as though it were some precious prize. Withdrawing its inclosure, he held close to the lamp a card. Bob viewed it with interest. He knew little about butterflies, but the specimen delineated was certainly worth attention. The picture showed a magnificent insect, with wings resembling the most delicate plates of shadings and markings and of the most exquisite hue and outlines. Some printing on the card announced that the famous butterfly picture was a reduction from the original, which showed a range of twelve to eighteen inches from wing tip to wing tip. Achilles manifested great pleasure in observing the profound interest his comrade manifested in the picture

"It must be fine to see a real butterfly of that size," said Bob.

"Outside of the card," resumed Achilles, "the letter, as I have said, told a good deal. For instance, it described this butterfly as a cave dweller—that is, out of season it located in some underground spot. What was better, it told of its habits, peculiarities, and also where it was known to be quite common back in the eighteenth century. Certain parts of Asia, South America and Japan were known, at one time, as places where it lived. The Golden Xanthidia seems always to have sought some great bodies of inland water. In the United States, the Southern bayous, and the Northern chain of Great Lakes were once favorable breeding places."

"You mean around here near Lake Michigan?" queried Bob.

"Lake Superior mainly," replied Achilles, "the instructions from the Institute say. There's a lot more in detail. But

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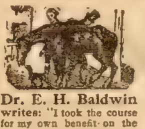

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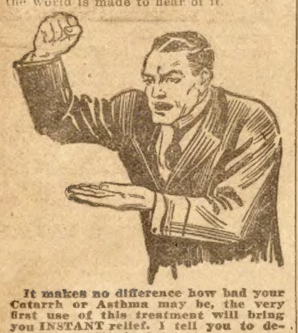

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I've told you enough to give you an idea about the subject."

"Yes, and it's a grand one!" declared Bob, with enthusiasm. "And two thousand five hundred dollars—and probably a good deal of praise for the lucky fellow who stumbles across one of these splendid little creatures. Oh, say Achilles! you've just set me on fire to go on a regular butterfly hunt!"

"I'm glad you take it so," observed the young scientist, in a pleased way. "I thought you would."

"I should think any live, up-to-date boy would go wild over the proposition," said Bob.

"What I am getting at," continued Achilles, "is to make you my partner in the proposition. If this unfortunate business," and he waved his hand about their confined prison place, "if this unfortunate business had not happened, by next week we would have been on our way up the north shore to visit a stretch of swampy wilderness, which seems to me to be the typical spot described in the letter."

"Well, that may come about yet," said Bob, in his optimistic way. "When we get out of the clutches of the man running the Arrow, we'll have many a chance to make a try as butterfly chasers."

"The launch has stopped," announced Achilles, at that moment.

"That's so," assented Bob, tracing the fact by the motion, or rather the non-motion of the craft.

He went to the broken porthole again and took a look outside. A fog obscured both water and land, however. He could make out no lights. As far as he could observe, the launch was moored in a little inlet of the lake, near the shore.

"I think that man is coming below now," remarked Achilles.

"Yes, I hear him coming down the cabin steps," added Bob. "Probably he'll have something to say to us now."

A minute later the door of the apartment beyond opened, and the captor of the boys came into view. He approached the door of the room they occupied, and proceeded to unlock it.

"You, Bright," he spoke in a mandatory way. "I've something to say to you. Come out."

"Can't you say it here," questioned Bob, "to my friend as well?"

"I've got no particular business with your friend," retorted the man, "and I have with you—mighty special, too, I can tell you. I'll say this much as a starter: I am in a position to offer you several thousand dollars if you act with reason, and help me to find out something I want to know."

Bob regarded the speaker in an incredulous way. Then he marveled at a remarkable coincidence. Twice within the hour he had been offered a small fortune.

CHAPTER X.

MORE MYSTERY.

THE man who had imprisoned the two academy boys did not wait to note the effect of his strange words. He stood aside and again addressed them.

"You, Bright," he said, "come into the next room. Your friend can stay here until I need him. Don't be stubborn. I'm master here, and can easily make you do what I want done, but I wish to be square. I'm going to give you a fair chance to help me out and benefit yourself."

Not for a moment did these protestations affect our hero. He knew from the face and bearing of the speaker that he was a schemer and a thoroughly bad man.

"Go ahead, Bob," urged Achilles.

"All right, I'll hear what you've got to say, anyway."

Bob followed the man through the next room and thence into the kitchen. His guide sat down at the table and motioned Bob to a chair opposite to him. He left the doors open connecting the apartments they had just passed through. He had lit a lamp on the table. Bob was nearest to the door leading into the cabin. He could readily have made a dash and got on deck before the man could overtake him. The latter seemed to read his thoughts, for he smiled grimly. Then he said:

"This boat is near enough shore for you to get off if you want to. If, after what I've said, you and your friend wish to leave here, the road's open."

"You mean," questioned Bob in some astonishment, "that we are free to go?"

"I mean just that," asserted the man.

"Why, if that's so," cried Bob, "why in the name of wonder have you locked us up and carried us so far away from home?"

"Well, in the first place," explained the man, "I found you here, meddlers. Now that I know you are Captain Bright's boy, it's different."

Bob thrilled at the sound of the name. They were precisely the words the barefooted boy had used in inquiring for him on the steamship wharf at Cliffden.

"What has my father to do with all this that you use his name?" he inquired hastily.

"Everything. Take your choice now—do you go or stay?"

"I will certainly remain until you tell me more," declared Bob, all wrought up at the drift affairs were taking. "I wish you would make matters clear. It's all a mystery so far, and I don't see the use of having things clouded and keeping them clouded."

"All right. I'm going to tell you a good deal," proceeded the man, "and every word of it is true. My name is Bissell, John Bissell."

"Why!" exclaimed Bob, "that is the name of my father's first mate on his schooner."

"That's right," nodded the other, "and I'm that man's brother. That boy in yonder is Ernest Bissell, the son of Thomas Bissell, your father's old mate."

Bob sat stupefied. He had never known anything about Thomas Bissell's family. The man himself, however, had sailed for years on his father's ship. Bob had heard his father speak of him frequently on his occasional visits home. Later he had heard him referred to by his Aunt Mary. A loyal shipmate and a very good man, he seemed to have the warm regard and friendship of Captain Bright.

Bob was all in a flutter. There was no subject in the world in which he was so much interested as in the probable fate of his father. Was he at last, in this strange, unheard-of way, to learn something about the lost ship and its missing crew?

"If you know where my father is," pleaded Bob, earnestly, "I beg of you to tell me."

"I don't know that," at once replied Bissell. "No one does, that I know of. All I do know is that the boy in yonder, my graceless nephew, Ernest Bissell, is trying to cheat me out of my rights."

"What do you call him graceless for?" inquired Bob.

"I'll tell you why when the right time comes," replied Bissell. "He isn't your kind, as you will find out. He's a bad, disobedient lad. I've taken him strongly in hand for his own good. Maybe you can help in making a better boy of him."

Bob scarcely believed the man. The barefooted boy looked more like some cowed, crushed refugee with the spirit all knocked out of him by trouble and neglect, than a criminal.

"To get down to facts," continued Bissell, "your father's ship and all the crew were probably lost off the coast of Labrador nearly a year ago."

Bob's face grew white and sorrowful. He could not trust the speaker as to telling the truth, but the conviction was one shared by most of the mariner's friends in Cliffden.

"All except my brother, John Bissell," amended the man, after an impressive pause. "In the storm he was knocked over into a small boat, ready to get away in when things reached their worst. The fall stunned him. When he got his senses back he found himself stranded on the shore of some island. He was found there nearly frozen. He and a large box covered over and over with raw sealskin were taken to a town near by. For a month he lay in a fever at a hospital. There he died."

"And no word learned about the rest of the crew of my father's ship?" inquired Bob, anxiously.

"Not so far as I've been able to find out," answered Bissell. "When my brother was dying, he wrote a letter telling all this to his boy, Ernest. He said he had directed a very valuable box to be sent to Ernest. He told Ernest what to do with the box."

"And Ernest told you?" asked Bob very much interested and eager to hear more.

"Told me!" snarled Bissell. "Yes, a lot of lies! Haven't I said he was a bad boy. Hello! Stop. Get back there, or I'll knock you down!"

There had come an interruption. Bissell, suddenly springing to his feet, ran for a corner of the room and seized a club standing there. Bob, greatly startled, came upright with a shock.

The barefooted boy had appeared upon the scene. He came rushing into the room, a wild, strange figure in his rags, his wasted face, his unnaturally gleaming eyes.

"I saw you! I heard you!" he shouted at Bob, with his fever-heated eyes fixed steadfastly upon him. "You are Captain Bright's boy. Your friend in there says so. Don't listen to this man. He is a villain! He is trying to rob you——"

There the speaker reeled. He collapsed to the floor, falling all in a helpless heap. A wild flurry of excitement had sustained him for a moment. It had been too much for his weakened vitality. His declaration only partly expressed, he had gone down like a shot.

Bob sprang forward quickly to catch the falling figure. He was too late. Bissell anticipated him, roughly lifted his senseless nephew and carried him back into the prison room with the words to Bob:

"I've a lot more to tell you. Stay here till I come back."

CHAPTER XI.

A PUZZLING SITUATION.

BOB BRIGHT was a good deal worked up. He found himself so suddenly in a startling line of action, and strange and unexpected things were happening

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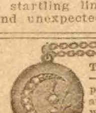

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so rapidly one after the other, that he was almost unable to take them in and analyze them all in a minute.

He watched Bissell carry his burden back into the prison room and throw him down on the pile of mattresses none too gently. Then the man drew a phial from his pocket and pressed it to the lips of the lad. He poured its contents down his throat. Ernest Bissell sank back like a log.

This time, Bob noticed, Bissell locked the grated door. This made of Achilles a prisoner, also. The man reentered the kitchen, closing the door after him.

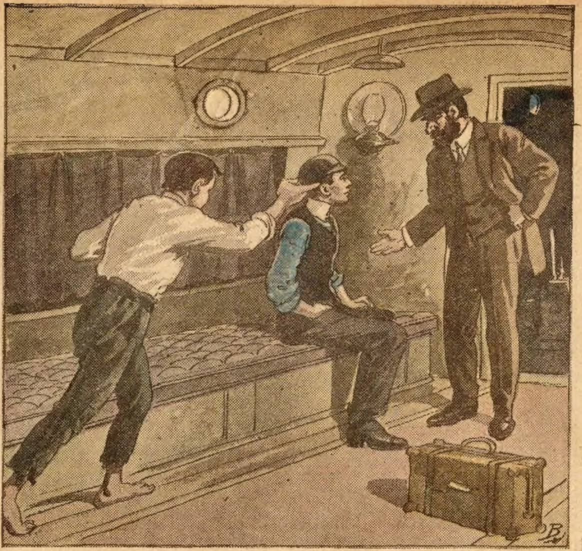
"I reckon that wild relative of mine will be quiet enough now," he observed, with a coarse chuckle.

"Yes, you seem to know how to quiet him right enough!" remarked Bob, shrinking in aversion from his companion, whom he disliked more and more each succeeding moment.

"I have to," declared Bissell. "He's mad, reckless, desperate in his ugly moods. Oh, but he's made me a heap of trouble! Me, the only person taking care of him, and his only living relative in this world."

Our hero himself was in a puzzled mood. He was a strong, independent youth and no coward. Only that he believed that by curbing his real emotions he might learn something worth while, he would have been ready to fight the man.

"Let me see," said Bissell, "we left off where my dead brother sent a letter and a box to Ernest."



"He is a villain!"

"What was in the box?" asked Bob.

"I have never found out."

"Why not?" questioned Bob in surprise.

"Because Ernest has never told me. He took that box before I could get my hands onto it, and hid it. Yes, sir, hid it—from me, its lawful owner!"

"Why, how is that?" challenged Bob, shrewdly. "If it was sent to him it was his, wasn't it?"

"Not at all," dissented Bissell, strenuously. The boy is a minor, I am his legal guardian, and, outside of all that, where property is left by the deceased without a will, a certain share of it goes to me. At any rate, he lugged the box away somewhere, and ever since has refused to say one word about its hiding-place."

"What did Ernest Bissell want to see me for?' asked Bob.

"Oh, one of his crazy notions. He hates me so much he would say anything or do anything mean just to spite me. Here's the nugget of the whole business: I want possession of that box to see that all interests involved are rightly cared for, don't you see? I got hold of the letter my brother wrote to Ernest. I've got it now. It went on to say that he was dying, and that he had sent a box with something in it worth ten thousand dollars."

"What could it be?" murmured Bob, in a speculative way.

"I don't know. That's to find out. It's worth trying, isn't it? In the letter, which I will show you some time if we come to terms, my brother spoke of 'the dear Captain,' meaning your father. He said he wanted the box opened, its contents sold, and then, if you or your aunt were in hard circumstances, you were to be given a few thousand dollars. That means something to you, doesn't it?"

"Why, it would make Aunt Mary pretty comfortable, and help me to go through with my education," spoke Bob in a wistful way. "Look here, mister, are you telling me the truth?" he propounded, looking his companion squarely in the eye.

"Every word of it," insisted Bissell. "What object would I have in telling you a lie? It will all come out right in the end, as you will see."

"And now, what do you want me to do?" challenged Bob, bluntly.

"Stay with me for a few days, you and your friend, that goggle-eyed fellow. The reason for him is that if I let him go it will put somebody on my track."

"Why," cried Bob, "if you are acting on the square, why are you making all this mystery, drugging that boy, stealing a boat, and kidnaping my friend and myself?"

Bissell winced. For a moment he was staggered. Then the usual crafty look came back into his face. His eyes brightened slyly as some idea struck him.

"That's plain," he explained. "It's all for the sake of that boy."

"In what way?" demanded Bob, urgently.

"Well, I'll very soon show you," replied Bissell. "I'm sorry you force me to disgrace my own relative, but you want to know so much, and you're a pretty shrewd sort of a lad who won't go into a thing until you know all the rights of it. I've got to do it. That boy you seem so sorry for, the son of your good father's respectable mate, is a criminal."

Bob started at this. It was a pretty hard thing to say and a harder one to believe. Bob's life had been so quiet and uneventful, and passed amid such good and gentle surroundings, that the mere thought of a criminal thrilled him and made him shrink.

"I'll show you something," proceeded Bissell.

He groped in his pocket and drew out an envelope. From this he took a folded inclosure. Bob saw that it was a handbill. It bore the heading in heavy ominous looking type: "$50 Reward." Under this was a picture and under that some reading matter. Bissell folded the paper so that only the upper half of the sheet showed.

"Do you recognize that?" he inquired.

"Why, yes!" cried Bob at once, but in great bewilderment. "It's the boy you call Ernest Bissell."

"You've guessed it right," nodded the man, with emphasis. "Now then, read what it says?"

He passed the sheet over to Bob. The latter perused it. In plain language it stated that fifty dollars reward would be paid for any information that would lead to the arrest of "Ernest Bissell, escaped from the State Reform School."

There could be no doubt as to the identity of the refugee. The barefooted boy answered closely to the description given of the escaped prisoner. With a sigh, and greatly disappointed, Bob handed the sheet back to his companion.

"I'm sorry," he said in a subdued tone, "dreadfully sorry!"

"So am I," addded Bissell, "but that don't mend it. I've had to demean my family to prove to you that I am a square, truthful man. You've forced me to it. The boy in yonder isn't to be trusted. He'll tell you a great cock-and-bull story unless he is got at right. I could go to law tomorrow and get along without your influence, only I'd have to bring disgrace on the family, as I tell you, and send him back to the reform school. It's been a hard job getting Ernest out of the way of the officers of the law. He got sick, too, and has been delirious at times, and I have had to give him strong medicines to quiet him down. Now, what do you say?"

"It's the strangest story I ever heard," replied Bob, slowly. "It's like some dream, all this you tell me. Now, then, what do you expect me to do?"

"First, as you must realize, I've got to keep going, so those academy folks of yours won't catch me and get me into trouble for borrowing their boat."

"Borrowing!" replaced Bob. "Is that what you call it?"

"I do," answered Bissell. "I'm no thief. I intend to return the launch safe and sound, and pay the academy people well for the use of it. I'm in a bad position, surely you must admit that. I want you to help me clear it all up."

"How can I?" inquired Bob.

"By doing as I ask you to do. Surely it's worth your while, when you come to think that it means several thousand dollars to your aunt and yourself."

"You mean that Achilles Phinizy and myself are to stay aboard the Arrow for some time?"

"A few days only, yes."

"And send no word to the academy or to anxious friends?"

"Not a syllable. That would defeat all my plans, as you must see. I want to get to a safe distance and a quiet place. Then I will fix it so that you will be able to persuade Ernest to tell where that hidden box is. Then we'll straighten everything up. I'll ship Ernest away somewhere so he can begin a new life, and my dead brother's wishes will be carried out to a T."

"I see," said Bob, reflectively.

"If you don't want to help me," continued Bissell, watching narrowly the effect of every word on his youthful companion, "just say so."

"And then what will you do?"

"Put you and your friend ashore, and try and work out this riddle in some other way," was the prompt response.

Bob leaned his head on his hand and reflected deeply for a few moments. Finally he looked up.

"Sir," he said, "my head is buzzing with all you have told me. Give me a little time to think it over, and I'll give you an answer in the morning."

"Good enough," nodded Bissell willingly. "Only remember that you can straighten out a bad tangle, and help yourself to a lot of money, if you want to."

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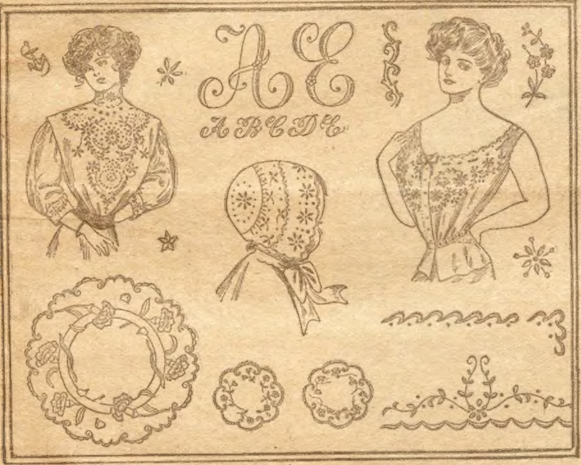

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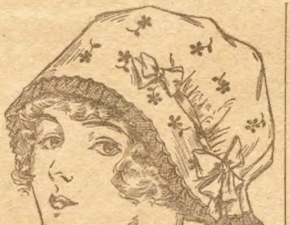

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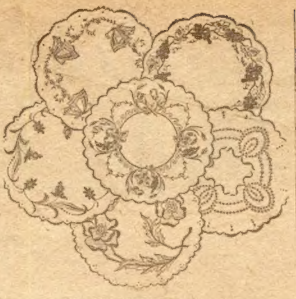

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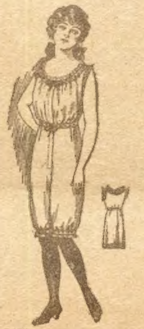
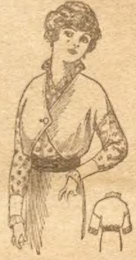
Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

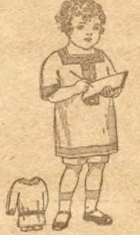
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



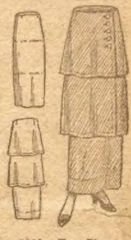
8187 Combination Drawers and Corset Cover for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



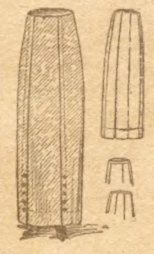
8184 Fancy Blouse, 34 to 42 bust.



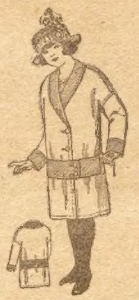
8193 Boy's Suit, 2 to 6 years.



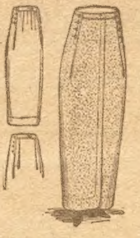
8201 Two-Piece Flounced Skirt for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



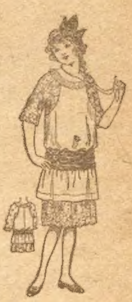
8174 Seven Gored Skirt, 26 to 36 waist.



8199 Girl's Coat, 10 to 14 years.



8183 One-Piece Peg Top Skirt, 22 to 32 waist.



8188 Girl's Low Be ted Dress, 10 to 14 years.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of The Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc, so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber, send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

.... CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US ....

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

NAME ....

Street No.
or R. F. D. ....

Box.............Town..

This is a.............................Subscription. State..........................
(New or Renewal)

If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

A GENUINE RUPTURE CURE SEN ON TRIAL TO PROVE IT

Don't Wear a Truss Any Longer

After Thirty Years' Experience I Have Produced An Appliance for Men, Women and Children That Actually Cures Rupture

Are You Ruptured?

If so, the BROOKS APPLIANCE is made for You; You and all other Men, Women and Children who are sufferers from this annoying and dangerous trouble. That truss you have been wearing—one of many you have tried—chafed and irritated you and was worse than nothing. It had springs and pads and harness and straps and fixings galore and was continually getting out of shape—slipping down or working up and always needing attention. Then, there were salves and washes and ointments to make the case worse and harder to bear. I want to say that you will find none of these annoyances and vexations in the BROOKS APPLIANCE. At least they are reduced to a minimum. This APPLIANCE was made with a view to eliminate, to do away with, just such trouble. I would have been foolish to work half a lifetime, thinking out and perfecting a thing that had no advantage or was not better than scores of other inventions upon the market. In my APPLIANCE you will find the old objectionable features LEFT OUT. You will find it easy to wear. You will scarcely realize that you are wearing it. There is no binding, drawing and slipping out of place. It does its work effectively and with comfort to the wearer. I want you to read my book, in which I have taken pains to give full particulars about it. Then, there are a few letters printed in it—selected at random from among hundreds written by men and women who have been cured. You can write these folks and see what they say. If I were you I would see to this matter without waiting. You can put off some things without running much risk, but a rupture is a dangerous proposition to neglect. A rupture is not only bad and serious of itself, but it leads to things infinitely worse. Fill out coupon and mail TODAY. Tomorrow will do, but today is better.

Don't Make The Child Wear a Truss Through Life

I Want to Reach the Parents of Every Ruptured Child in the Country.

The Truss Is a Flesh Torturing Invention Fit Only As a Relic of Barbarity.

The Brooks Appliance Cured His Rupture. Now He Is as Sound and Whole as if He Had Never Been Ruptured.

I want them to know about the Automatic Air Cushion Rupture Appliance that I make for children who are afflicted in this way.

My Appliance can be put on any child with perfect safety to the little one. For growing children there is nothing better to be had—no matter how much you pay—than my Appliance. I want the parents or others who may have children in their care to understand that there should be no delay in getting proper help for ruptured children.

Every day that the rupture is allowed to go on without the right means of correcting it—just so much harder will it be for the child to get rid of it.

No ruptured child can ever be free from the thought of the rupture and it is not fair to any child not to have an equal chance with other children. No matter what we may wish to think—ruptured children do not have an equal chance.

Common trusses do not help.

Thousands of men and women know that from their own experience with such trusses.

But it is not necessary for children to wear harsh, cumbersome, steel trusses any more.

You may have had to wear something like this but don't make your child do it. Give the child something better.

My Appliance is better and I want to prove it to you.

I will make an Appliance to the child's measure, send it on TRIAL—put it into your hands to see and use and then you can say whether it is what I claim or not.

The Automatic Air Cushion conforms with every movement of the child; there is an even, gentle pressure which gradually binds the broken parts together—as you would bind a broken limb—and then no matter how much the child jumps, runs, rolls over or falls down—the pressure is kept up just the same—always drawing the parts together.

Write me today and get all the information—send the coupon.

The above is C. E. Brooks of Marshall, Mich., the Inventor, who has been curing rupture for over 30 years. If ruptured write him today.

If you have tried most everything else, come to me. Where others fail is where I have my greatest success. Send attached coupon today and I will send you free my illustrated book on rupture and its cure, showing my Appliance and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and were cured. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember, I use no salves, no harness, no lies.

I send on trial to prove what I say is true. You are the judge and once having seen my illustrated book and read it you will be as enthusiastic as my hundreds of patients whose letters you may also read. Fill out free coupon below and mail today. It's well worth your time whether you try my appliance or not.

Others Failed But the Appliance Cured

C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:—

Your Appliance did all you claim for the little boy and more, for it cured him sound and well. We let him wear it for about a year in all, although it cured him 3 months after he had begun to wear it. We had tried several other remedies and got no relief, and I shall certainly recommend it to friends, for we surely owe it to you. Yours respectfully,

WM. PATTERSON.
No 717 S. Main St., Akron, Ohio.

Pennsylvania Man Thankful

Mr. C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:—

Perhaps it will interest you to know that I have been ruptured six years and have always had trouble with it till I got your Appliance. It is very easy to wear, fits neat and snug, and is not in the way at any time, day or night. In fact, at times I did not know I had it on; it just adapted itself to the shape of the body and seemed to be a part of the body, as it clung to the spot, no matter what position I was in.

It would be a veritable God-send to the unfortunates who suffer from rupture if all could procure the Brooks Rupture Appliance and wear it. They would certainly never regret it.

My rupture is now all healed up and nothing ever did it but your Appliance. Whenever the opportunity presents itself I will say a good word for your Appliance, and also the honorable way in which you deal with ruptured people. It is a pleasure to recommend a good thing among your friends or strangers, I am,

Yours very sincerely,
JAMES A. BRITTON.
80 Spring St., Bethlehem, Pa.

Remember

I send my Appliance on trial to prove what I say is true. You are to be the judge. Fill out free coupon below and mail today.

Ten Reasons Why

You Should Send for Brooks' Rupture Appliance

1. It is absolutely the only Appliance of the kind on the market today, and in it are embodied the principles that inventors have sought after for years.
2. The Appliance for retaining the rupture cannot be thrown out of position.
3. Being an air cushion of soft rubber it clings closely to the body, yet never blisters or causes irritation.
4. Unlike the ordinary so-called pads, used in other trusses, it is not cumbersome or ungainly.
5. It is small, soft and pliable, and positively cannot be detected through the clothing.
6. The soft, pliable bands holding the Appliance do not give one the unpleasant sensation of wearing a harness.
7. There is nothing about it to get foul, and when it becomes soiled it can be washed without injuring it in the least.
8. There are no metal springs in the Appliance to torture one by cutting and bruising the flesh.
9. All of the material of which the Appliances are made is of the very best that money can buy, making it a durable and safe Appliance to wear.
10. My reputation for honesty and fair dealing is so thoroughly established by an experience of over thirty years of dealing with the public, and my prices are so reasonable, my terms so fair, that there certainly should be no hesitancy in sending free coupon today.

Cured at the Age of 76

Mr. C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:—

I began using your Appliance for the cure of rupture (I had a pretty bad case) I think in May, 1905. On November 20, 1905, I quit using it. Since that time I have not needed or used it. I am well of rupture and rank myself among those cured by the Brooks Discovery, which, considering my age, 76 years, I regard as remarkable. Very sincerely yours,

SAM A. HOOVER.
High Point, N. C.

Child Cured in Four Months

C. E. Brooks,

Dear Sir:—The baby's rupture is altogether cured, thanks to your appliance and we are so thankful to you. If we could only have known of it sooner our little boy would not have had to suffer near as much as he did. He wore your brace a little over four months and has not worn it now for six weeks.

Yours very truly,
ANDREW EGGENBERGER.
21 Jansen St. Dubuque, Iowa.

Confederate Veteran Cured

Commerce, Ga., R. F. D. No. 11.
Mr. C. E. Brooks

Dear Sir:—I am glad to tell you that I am now sound and well and can plough or do any heavy work. I can say your Appliance has effected a permanent cure. Before getting your Appliance I was in a terrible condition and had given up all hope of ever being any better. If it hadn't been for your Appliance I would never have been cured. I am sixty-eight years old and served three years in Eckle's Artillery, Oglethorpe Co. I hope God will reward you for the good you are doing for suffering humanity.

Yours sincerely,
H. D. BANKS.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON

C. E. BROOKS, 1843 A State St., Marshall, Mich.

Please send me by mail, in plain wrapper, your illustrated book and full information about your Appliance for the cure of rupture.

Name ....

City ....

R. F. D. .... State ....